

PHYSICO-THEOLOGY;  
OR, A  
PHILOSOPHICO-MORAL  
DISQUISITION  
CONCERNING  
HUMAN NATURE,  
FREE AGENCY,  
MORAL GOVERNMENT,  
AND  
DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

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By T. MORGAN, M. D.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for T. COX at the LAMB under the  
Royal-Exchange.  
MDCCLXI.



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T H E

# P R E F A C E.

**T**HE Title Page so fully expresses the subject Matter and Design of this Work, that I have but very little to add by Way of Preface. After all the Labours and Studies of so many learned Men, and so many excellent Tracts written upon moral Subjects, it seem'd to me, that an entire Scheme or System of natural Religion was very much wanting. Discourses of this Kind have been so much mix'd and blended with positive Institutions and Laws, under the Notion of Revelation, that the Subject itself has been extremely perplex'd and darkened. How to reconcile Revelation with Reason and the Religion of Nature, has been the great Inquiry, and what has chiefly employ'd the Thoughts and Pens of the most learned Christian Critics. For this no Pains have been spared, and almost an infinite Number of Volumes have been written to

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very little Purpose, or rather very bad Purpose, by making Religion the most doubtful and disputable Thing in the World. What have all the voluminous Labours of Divines tended to, for many hundred Years back, their numerous, or rather innumerable Commentaries, Expositions, Paraphrases, Notes, and Glosses upon the Bible? What, I say, has been aim'd at or pretended in all this, but to reveal the reveal'd Will of God, which they have still left more dark and doubtful than before?

This Consideration, after several Years fruitless Reading and Study to grope out God and Religion among the Rubbish of Authors, and the celebrated learned Christian Critics and Expositors, put me, at last, upon a strict, serious Enquiry, what Religion, true Religion might be, or whether there were any Thing in it or no, that might be level to human Understandings, and that Mankind might agree in, without depending much upon the authoriz'd Professors of this dark Science, who could never agree among themselves.

And here I set myself, with all the Attention and Application I could, to study Nature, and the general Laws which are settled and established among the several Gradations, Ranks and Classes of Beings, so far as they are connected with intelligent, moral Agency,

Here

## The P R E F A C E. v

Here I found it necessary to examine the mechanical Powers and Properties of Bodies, as distinct from the essential Attributes and Properties of mere passive Matter. In this Inquiry it was presently visible that, with regard to these mechanical Powers, as they are call'd, the Bodies themselves were purely passive, that they do not properly act, but are incessantly acted upon by some universal, intelligent, designing Cause.

Next, in examining the Powers and Properties of Light, or the visive Element, I found a material Substance existing, and moveable in Space, but not endued with Gravity, Resistance, Pressure, or any other mechanical Power or Property whatever; and yet, that it actuated and exerted all the mechanical Powers of Bodies, and was the material, immechanical Principle of all animal and vegetable Life, Sense and Motion. And pursuing this, it was evident to me, that all Nature is one intire Whole, or finished Piece, individuated and held together by a *Unity of Design*, and established general Laws, at first, and at once fix'd and settled by the Author of Nature; and which original Plan was so perfect as not to require any farther Alterations or Amendments upon particular Occasions, or arising Incidents in Futurity. And I have endeavour'd to prove,  
that



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that these general Laws will account for a particular Providence, and all the Measures which God takes in the Preservation and Government of the World.

This Plan of Nature and Religion, of divine Government, both physical and moral, I have traced through the whole Creation, so far as my Observation, Experience or Reasonings could go. And the Result of these Enquiries I now lay before the Reader, to approve or censure as he may see Occasion.

But however that may be, or what Fate soever this Work may meet with in the World, I can expect no Thanks or Favour from the Divines, for explaining and defending the Religion of God and Nature, while Revelation, I mean the Word, has been left out of the Account. They will make me, I presume, an Atheist, for demonstrating the Being, Providence, continual Presence, and incessant Agency and Concurrence of the Deity in all the Works and Ways of Nature; and an Infidel, for not believing what they themselves could never understand and explain. But I shall endeavour patiently to bear such Usage, as I have experienced but too much of it already. They may call me Atheist, Infidel, Dog, or Devil; but I expect a more righteous Judge.

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Judgment, to which I appeal: And in the mean While shall here conclude, subscribing myself the Reader's

H T

*Most Obedient Humble Servant,*

Union Court,  
Broad-Street,  
March 18, 1740.

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# Physico-Theology.

## CHAP. I. SECT. I.

*Of Matter in general, and the essential and mechanical Powers or Properties of Bodies.*

**M**ATTER is an extended, solid, or impenetrable and moveable Substance: This Definition takes in every Thing that is necessary and essential to Matter, from our first Ideas and Conceptions of it, deriv'd from Sense and Experience. As Extension is an essential Property of Matter, and enters into its Definition and primary Conception or Idea, it must follow, that Matter is infinitely divisible: For it is impossible to conceive of Extension without Dimensions or Parts, and consequently, what is not extended, and divisible

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into



into smaller Parts, or what does not consist of *Partes extra Partes*, cannot be Matter: For to suppose, that Monads, indivisible Atoms, or Particles without Dimension, or smaller Parts, should, when put together, or added in any finite assignable Number, make up a real Quantity consisting of Parts or Dimension, is a plain Contradiction, and destroys the very Nature, Conception, and original Idea of the Thing. And this Argument, drawn from the first Conception and Idea of the Thing, is as clear a Proof of the infinite Divisibility of Quantity, of Time and Space, Matter and Motion, as any Mathematical Demonstration can amount to. The Solidity or Impenetrability of Matter in its very Idea and Conception implies, that no two Particles of solid, impenetrable Matter can exist in the same Place, or in the same Part of Space at once; for this being supposed, all Matter might exist in the same Space, and under the same Dimension, tho' infinitely small, and consequently, Matter would be nothing, or would not be extended, solid and impenetrable, contrary to the Supposition.

With regard to Motion and Rest, so far as we can conceive of it, or form any Idea of it, all Matter is perfectly indifferent, and purely passive: It is moveable, but has no inherent active or self-moving Power; if once supposed at Rest, it must for ever continue in that

that State of Rest or Inaction, till it is put out of it, or moved by some extrinsic Cause. And as no Body or Mass of Matter can move itself, so neither can it continue its own Motion, or communicate Motion to another by any intrinsic Power or Property in itself. Whatever has a Power, Force or Energy in itself, of continuing its own Motion, or communicating Motion to another, must have the same intrinsic Power of beginning Motion, or moving itself without being acted upon or moved from without, or by any extrinsic Cause; for the Continuation of Motion, or communicating Motion to another, requires an active Force or Energy, as much as the Beginning of Motion. And to say, that a Body, or any Quantity or Mass of passive Matter, tho' it cannot begin, yet may continue its own Motion, or communicate Motion to other Bodies by any intrinsic Power or Property of its own, is the same Absurdity as saying, that an Effect may be without a Cause, and consequently, that every Thing may be Effect without Cause. Rest is no *Action*, and requires no *Cause*, but Motion is Action, and we know of no Action without Motion. As Motion is Action or active Force, the Continuation of Motion is continued Action or active Force; and therefore, to say that Motion may continue without continued Action or active Force and Causality, is the same Thing in Effect, as

saying that it may begin without any active Force or Cause at all. As Matter, therefore, in itself is purely passive, and cannot move or act at all, otherwise than as it is moved and acted upon, it is evident, that whatever active Forces or Powers of continuing and communicating Motion we ascribe to Bodies, must be owing to some extrinsic active Power or Energy, by which Bodies are continually impress'd and acted upon, under such and such Laws and Conditions of Motion: If we should suppose otherwise, we might as well imagine, that Bodies are capable of moving, directing, and determining themselves, as well as of continuing that Motion, or communicating any Part of it to other Bodies, under certain Laws and Conditions of Geometry and Proportion. I have here only considered, in short, what is essential or non-essential to Matter; but there are other accidental and occasional Properties and Affections of Matter, such as the different Figure, Magnitude, Density, Rarity, Fixation, and Fluidity of Bodies, &c. which do not fall within the Compass of my present Design, to make any particular Remarks or Observations on here. For tho' all Bodies must exist under some Figure, Magnitude, Density and Rarity, Fixation and Fluidity or other, yet, as this cannot be certainly determined with regard to the minute insensible Parts of Matter, I must leave such Disquisitions to the  
corpus-

corpuscularian Philosophers. But it will be more to my Purpose, and a farther Confirmation of what has been already offered, to consider and explain what we call the mechanical Powers and Properties of Bodies, and this will be the Business of the next Section.

§. 2. We observe in Bodies a mutual Action and Re-action, by which, under certain Laws and Conditions of reciprocal Agency, they receive and communicate, resist or retain any given Quantity of Motion: And this Property of receiving, communicating, resisting or retaining, by such and such establish'd Laws, we call the mechanical Powers, Forces or Actions of Bodies. Of these, the first and chief, to which all the rest are proportional, is *Gravity*; by this Property or Power all Bodies, and all the Parts of Bodies, universally are drawn or urged towards one another by Forces proportional to their Quantity of Matter directly, and the Squares of their Distances reciprocally. And from hence it is evident, that this Force or Power of Gravity is not essential to, or inherent in the Matter itself: For in this Case, the Gravity or Weight of Bodies must be always and every where the same, while the Quantity of Matter is the same: This is so with regard to all the essential Properties of Matter, which enter into its Definition, and make a Part of its nominal or specific Essence. Thus the Figure, Magnitude, Density, Solidity, and Quantity of any Body, or Parcel of Matter,



are not altered by any different Position or Distance, with respect to any particular Point or Centre, because these Properties or Attributes are considered as inherent in the Matter itself; but in regard to Gravity, and all the other mechanical Powers, as I shall shew afterward, the Case is in Fact vastly different. A Body of a given Weight here at the Earth's Surface, or the Distance of one Semi-diameter, would gravitate or weigh but a fourth Part so much at a double Distance, or the Distance of two Semi-diameters, and but a ninth Part at a triple Distance, &c. And from hence it is very plain, that this Force or Power acting upon Bodies is not essential to, or inherent in those Bodies themselves. In this Case, nothing could be more absurd, than saying that the Body itself exerts this incessant Force or active Energy, as the proper Agent, or efficient Cause of it: For supposing Matter in such Cases to exert and determine its own Motion, would be making it a true and proper Agent, and the Subject of Intelligence, Will, and Choice. It must, therefore, be necessarily supposed, that gravitating Bodies do not thus exert and direct their own Motion upon the Principles of Reason, Wisdom, and the most exact Geometry; but that they are thus acted upon by some extrinsic Cause, which, by the highest Wisdom, Reason, and Choice, acts incessantly upon the whole material mechanical System, from the Laws of the strictest Harmony

mony and Proportion. And this Cause can be no other but the supreme, universal Agent, Author, Governor and Director of all Nature, or God himself. But this Argument will be afterwards farther pursued.

To this Force or Power of *Gravity*, the *Pressure* of *Fluids* is perfectly analogous, and necessarily connected with it; There is this Difference, indeed, which makes them distinct Laws of Nature, that Gravity affects all Bodies or mechanical Matter universally; but the Law of Pressure, in maintaining a constant *Æquilibrium*, and the mighty Effort which is instantaneously exerted to recover it, when lost, is peculiar to Fluids. It is well known, that all Fluids press in Proportion to the perpendicular Height thro' which such Pressure is propagated, and the Surface or Base press'd upon; or, which is the same Thing, the perpendicular Height multiply'd into the Base, gives us the Quantity or Force of Pressure. And therefore, in a conical Vessel, or Pipe fill'd with Water, the Bottom or Base is as much press'd, as a Cylinder of the same Base and Height: And this Pressure is propagated instantaneously to all the Parts of a communicating Fluid in such Manner, as that every equal Part of the Fluid shall be equally press'd. This is the Law of Nature, by which the *Æquilibrium* and Communication of Fluids are kept up, and their different Velocities determined at the different Sec-

tions, greater or less, thro' which they flow. And from hence arises a very remarkable Difference between the Action of Gravity in general, and the Pressure of Fluids: Gravity acts in one single Direction only, as it urges the Body to a particular Point or Centre; but Pressure acts equally and *undiquaque* in all Directions alike; and therefore, Water press'd from a given Height will ascend perpendicularly against the Force of Gravity, with the same Velocity, and in the same Time, that it would descend or flow horizontally.

But I shall now consider the wonderful Analogy and Agreement between Gravity and Pressure, and how necessarily one depends on the other. Now here it is certain in Fact, that the Pressure which generates the Motion of Fluids is always equal to a determinate, assignable Weight or Force of Gravity; and this Weight being taken off, or set against the Pressure in a contrary Direction, immediately suspends the whole Motion; and brings the Fluid to perfect Rest, be the Quantity of the Fluid ever so great: And by this Law of Fluidity a single Drop may counter-balance the whole Ocean, and the least Pressure may generate or suspend the greatest Quantity of Motion.

It is well known, that all Bodies in their perpendicular Descent will describe equal Spaces, and acquire equal Velocities, in equal Times, be their Quantity of Matter more or less: And  
analogous

## Ch. I. Physico-Theology. 9

analogous hereunto, all Fluids press'd from a given Height will acquire equal Velocities, and describe equal Spaces in equal Times, be the Quantity of Matter pressing and generating the Velocity more or less. And as the Velocities acquir'd by Bodies descending by the sole Force of Gravity, are always in the subduplicate Ratio of the Spaces thro' which they descend, so the Velocities of Fluids generated by Pressure, are always in the same subduplicate Ratio, or as the square Roots of the perpendicular Heights thro' which such Pressure is propagated. And from hence we may conclude, by Analogy of Nature, that Gravity and Pressure are both owing to the same Cause, and are necessarily connected with each other: But yet they are not precisely the same Force, or the same Law of Nature, because, as I observed, the Pressure of Fluids acts in all Directions alike, upwards and laterally, as much as downwards, or against the Force of Gravity, as much as with it; whereas Gravity acts only in the one single rectilinear Direction of the attractive Force: And yet at the same Time it is certain, that if Gravity should be taken off, or suspended but for one Moment, all Pressure, and all Motion arising from it, must immediately cease. This is certain in regard to Pressure from the Effect, for let a Fluid be press'd from ever so great a Height, and let the Velocity arising from such Pressure be as great



great as it will, or the Quantity of Matter in Motion be ever so great, the whole Motion of the communicating Fluid immediately ceases, and the Motion is not continued after the Pressure is suspended, or otherwise counter-balanced, as it would be in a Body which had conceived Motion by one single Impulse, which Motion would continue after the Impulse, and when the apparent Cause of it ceases to act. And thus any heavy Body lying upon a plain Table may be thrust or push'd forward with the Hand or Finger, with any given Velocity; but as soon as that Pressure is taken off, the Motion immediately ceases, and is not continued, as it would have been, had the same Motion been communicated by an Impulse. And from hence we must conclude, that as Fluids press'd from a given Height observe the same Law of Acceleration and Velocity with all Bodies in their perpendicular Descent thro' given Spaces, so the same Consequence and Effect must follow, supposing that one could be instantly suspended or taken off, as much as the other. As the Motion of a Fluid by Pressure from any given Height is immediately stopt, and suspended, by taking off or counter-balancing that Pressure, so the whole Motion and Velocity of a falling Body would immediately cease, supposing the Force or Power of Gravity but for one Moment to be taken off or suspended, after which the Motion would  
not

not continue, as it does after the Stroak or Ictus, where the Motion had been communicated by Impulse.

§. 3. From what has been above observ'd it must follow, that Gravity and Pressure in Bodies are Forces or Laws of Nature, perfectly distinct from Impulse or the Law of communicating Motion by a Blow or Ictus. According to this Law, a Body being once put into Motion by one single Impulse, will continue for ever to move on in the Direction of the moving Force, without any Continuation or Repetition of the Stroak or Impulse. This arises from what we call the Resistance or *vis Inertiae* of Bodies, which is a certain Force they seem to exert in order to continue or retain themselves in their present State either of Motion or Rest; but Fluids, I have observed, or even solid Bodies, put into Motion by Pressure, without a Blow or Impulse, exert no such Power of continuing themselves *in statu quo*, but the whole Motion instantly ceases as soon as the Cause is remov'd.

§. 4. I have shewn, that the Pressure of Fluids, tho' it is the necessary Consequence of their Gravity, yet it is not precisely the same Power, Force, or Law of Nature. There could be no Pressure of Fluids without Gravity or Weight, but then this Pressure is not limited or determined by the Law of Gravity to one single rectilinear Direction, but will

will act as forcibly against the Power of Gravity as with it, where the perpendicular Height, through which the Pressure is propagated, is the same. And as the Pressure of Fluids, so the Resistance or *vis Inertia* of all Bodies in general is the Result of Gravity and the necessary Consequence of it. If Bodies had no Weight, or if they were not stretched or drawn to a Centre, they could have no such Power or Property as *vis Inertia* or Resistance, and would require no determinate Force to move them laterally. A heavy Body is just in the same State as if it had no Weight or Gravity, but was suspended, or hung to a Line or Cord, and pull'd or stretch'd with the same Force by some active Power apply'd to it. Let us suppose a Body void of Weight or Gravity to be hung or suspended by a Rope or Line, and in this Case, it would not stretch the Cord at all, nor make any Resistance to Motion one Way or another. In this Case, the Body might be moved any Way alike, upwards or downwards, or laterally, with the same Force, and would make no Resistance to the smallest Force. But now let us suppose the Body to be heavy or endued with Gravity, and then it must stretch the Cord in a given Direction, or force it towards the Centre. And now the Difficulty or Force required to move the Body laterally will be proportional to the Tension of the Line, i. e. to the Weight of the Body, or the Power by  
which

which it is drawn or stretch'd. But this Power or Property of resisting or retaining Motion is what we call the *vis Inertiæ*, and is therefore necessarily connected with the Power of Gravity.

§. 5. Besides Gravity, Pressure and *vis Inertiæ*, there is another great and very remarkable mechanical Power or Property in Fluids, which is the Force or Conatus they exert to retain their *Æquilibrium* or equal Pressure, and to regain it, when lost. This Force is almost incredible, and can be reduced to no certain Computation. It is always equal to the Resistance, tho' ever so great. The least Drop of Water, when put out of its *Æquilibrium* with the communicating Fluid, will exert a Force sufficient to stop or turn back the whole Ocean. It is well known that Water will rise perpendicularly to the same Height from which it is press'd, and after this, the Addition of a single Drop confined in a Pipe and retaining its Communication with the rest, would give the whole Body of the Fluid a contrary Direction, be its Quantity ever so great.

§. 6. Another mechanical Power or Property of Bodies, and near a-kin to the former, is what we call Elasticity. We may observe in all Bodies, so far as they are compressible, a restitutive Force, by which they exert a mighty Conatus, or endeavour to restore themselves to their primitive State and Position



tion of Parts, after they had been put out of it by any external impress'd Force or Violence. By this Power or Property in Matter, solid elastic Bodies seem to exert the same Force or Conatus *ad Æquilibrium* with Fluids themselves. This may be easily accounted for, supposing no other Fluid in Nature to be elastic, or to be endued with a centrifugal Force, but *Air*. It is well known that all the Pores and Interstices of solid Bodies are fill'd with Air, under different Degrees of Rarefaction or Condensation: And that Air, when condensed by Pressure, or rarify'd by Heat, will exert an incredible Force to regain an *Æquilibrium* with its circumambient Air. Let us suppose then, a Ball, or any Body of Brass, Steel, Cork, or any other elastic Body that will sustain a forcible Ictus or Stroak without breaking; let us suppose, I say, any such solid Body by the Force of an Impulse or Blow to be compress'd, and its constituent Parts brought nearer together: It is evident in this Case, that the Air contain'd within the Pores and Interstices of such a Body, where the Parts are thus compress'd and brought nearer together, must at the same Time be proportionally compress'd, and forced into less Room. And then, the elastic centrifugal Force of this included compress'd Air must exert itself, and restore the solid Parts of the Body to their former natural State, Figure, and Position.

It may be observ'd here, that *Weight* and *Heat*; or the Action of *Gravity*, and *Fire* upon Air have quite contrary Effects. The Air is condensed in Proportion to its Compressure or the Action of Gravity, and rarify'd in Proportion to its Heat or the Action of Fire upon it. And from hence it is evident, that Fire and Air are the two Counterforces in Nature, that they mutually exert and actuate the different Powers and Properties of each other, and that where their different and contrary Forces are not conjunctly exerted, neither of them has any Force or Action at all. This may be farther improv'd afterwards, but I here only leave it as a Matter of Observation, Experience, and Fact.

§. 7. There is another Effect or Modification of Gravity, which may be call'd the corpuscular Attraction, by which the small contiguous Particles of Matter attract, cohere, and unite with each other. Thus two Globules of Quicksilver, when they come into Contact or extremely near, will run swiftly together and form one large Globule. In like Manner the small contiguous Drops of a watery Cloud or Vapour, uniting by their mutual Attraction in large Drops, and thereby acquiring a greater Weight and Tendency to the common Centre, descend through the Air and fall in Rain. And from this same Principle it is, that the minute Particles of Water, when rarify'd into Vapour, will ascend  
and

and swim in Air, by the common Law of Gravity and the Equilibrium of Fluids.

From what has been hitherto observ'd as Matter of Fact and Experience, it may appear, that all the mechanical Powers, Properties, and Actions of Bodies depend on, and are the immediate necessary Result of Gravity; so that were this Power, Force, or Energy, which is continually impress'd on the whole material, mechanical System, but once suspended, all the mechanical Powers, Properties, and mutual Actions and Re-actions of Bodies upon each other must immediately cease. In this Case, there could be no such Thing as Resistance and *vis Inertiae*, no Communication of Motion by Impulse, or Retention of that Motion, no Pressure or Effort towards an Equilibrium in Fluids, no Spring or Elasticity in Solids, and no Cohesion in any Parts of Matter, but the whole mechanical Frame of material Nature must, upon this Supposition, be instantly dissolv'd. All this is so very plain, that no Man who has attentively considered what we call the mechanical Powers, Properties, and Actions of Bodies, can well doubt of it, or once imagine, that they are essential to Matter itself. And if they are not inherent and essential to Matter, they must arise from continual Presence, Power, and Agency of some extrinsic and extra-essential Cause. And this Cause must be universal, it must penetrate and pervade

vade the whole Frame of Nature, be intimately present with the inmost Substance and Essence of all natural Bodies, and incessantly exert an active Power or Energy upon every Part or Particle of Matter, under such and such Laws or Rules of Wisdom, Order, and Proportion.

That Extension, Solidity, or Impenetrability, and Mobility, or a passive Indifferency to Rest or Motion, are essential to Matter, cannot be doubted, because it is impossible to conceive of Matter without these: But a mere passive Recipency, Impressibility, or Indifferency to Rest or Motion, cannot be the Cause of Motion. The Motion of a Body is not its own Action; it does not act, but is acted upon. If Matter is purely passive, if it can move only as it is moved, and cannot alter its own State of Motion or Rest, it is most evident, all Motion in Bodies must be owing to some extrinsic Cause or Agency, by which they are moved and acted upon. It would be a manifest Contradiction, to say that a Body has a Power of moving another, tho' it has no intrinsic self-moving Principle, or Power of moving itself: One Body no more moves another in the active, proper Sense, than it moves itself, or produces and continues its own Motion. For in this Case, or upon such a Supposition, Matter must be endued with proper Agency, Intelligence, Will, or Choice. It is plainly impossible,



that there should be any Action or Motion at all without Intelligence, Will, and Choice, in the proper Agent, or Cause of that Action or Motion; for this being supposed, all Action, and every Thing that is done in Nature, might be mere passive Motion, or Effect without Cause. When we say, therefore, that a Body moves, or moves another Body, this must be understood in the *passive*, and not in the *active* Sense; or otherwise the Proposition would be absolutely and demonstratively false, absurd, and impossible.

§. 8. Having premised thus much, I may now pursue a little farther the Consideration of Gravity. I have shewn, that all the other mechanical Powers and Properties of Bodies necessarily depend on it, and flow from it; and that this being once removed or suspended, all the rest must; and therefore, what shall be proved with respect to Gravity, as to its being essential or non-essential to Matter, must be true of all the other mechanical Powers. Now it is plain, that Gravity is a Power or Impression which affects Bodies, not as they exist in themselves, but as they are posited, situated, or exist relatively, and with respect to other Bodies. Let us suppose then, that only one single Body existed, or that a small Body, suppose of a cubic Inch, should be remov'd at an infinite Distance from any other Body; and it is plain, in this Case, that the Body would have no  
Weight

Weight or Gravity, no Tension or Tendency one Way more than other, and consequently, no *vis Inertia*, or Resistance from Rest to Motion, or from Motion to Rest: Such a Body would be moveable in all Directions alike, and would make no Resistance to Motion in any Direction; or, which is the same Thing, it would be divested of all those Powers and Properties, which we call *mechanical*. But upon this Supposition, all the essential Properties of Matter would still remain; for the Supposition now put, of the Absence or Suspension of Gravity, could not alter the Figure, Magnitude, Density, Solidity, or Mobility of the Body: These would remain as essential to, and constituent of our complex Idea of Matter, it being impossible to form any Idea of Matter without some Figure, Magnitude, Density and Solidity or other. To remove these, would be to destroy the first Notion and Conception of Matter, and to suppose it nothing at all, either active or passive.

From hence it is plain, that Gravity is an active Force or Energy impress'd from without, according to certain Laws and Proportions relative to Bodies, with respect to their different Distances and Quantities of Matter; and where the Quantity of Matter, and every Thing intrinsic and essential to the Body, remain the same, this Power of Gravity acting upon it may be infinitely different, or

even quite suspended: And this is a Demonstration, that such an active Force or Energy continually impress'd upon the whole mechanical System, under such Laws and Rules of Wisdom, Order, and Proportion, that this Force or Energy, I say, is not essential to Matter, or any inherent Power or Property of the Bodies themselves.

But after all that has been hitherto said, some, perhaps, may doubt, whether the *vis Inertiæ*, or the Power and Property of continuing *in statu quo*, and resisting any Change, be not essential to Matter. I suppose no body would talk of the Power of resting, or retaining Rest, in passive Matter, since this is really no Power at all, but the Absence or Privation of all Force or moving Power; but the Power of impressing, exciting, retaining, and continuing Motion, is certainly an active Power, either in Matter itself, or in something else acting upon it. *Rest*, where Motion has not preceded, is no Effect, and requires no Cause; since all Matter must have remain'd in eternal Rest, if it had not been acted upon, and can move no longer than it is moved.

§. 9. But what has been observed in the last Section, is a Matter that requires a deeper Consideration. It has been generally admitted as a Maxim in Philosophy, as well as in the common Sense and Use of Language, that, *take away the Cause, and the Effect will cease:*

*cease*: But however plain and self-evident this Principle may seem in common Sense, and the natural Use of Language, it is not, I find, to be admitted in Philosophy; or at least, not in that Sort of Philosophy, which depends on no Principles at all, and in which Men may be very able Philosophers without thinking.

In all proper Agency, Efficiency, or Causality, the Effect being nothing else, but the Action of the Cause *ad extra*, to suppose one may continue, when the other ceases, is to suppose an Effect without a Cause; or which is the same Thing, supposing nothing at all.

In the Motion of Bodies, either the Body moves, and determines itself by an intrinsic, self-motive Power of its own, or otherwise it must be moved and acted upon from without, as long as it continues to move, or retain its Motion. To say, that tho' a Body cannot move itself, or begin to move by any intrinsic, self-motive Power of its own, yet, being once moved, it may continue to move, or persevere in Motion for any Time, or even to Eternity, by an intrinsic Power or Property of its own; the affirming this, I say, must be an express Contradiction, since it is affirming, that tho' a Body cannot *begin*, it may yet continue its own Motion, and consequently, that it has and has not a self-motive Power.



It is plain, in Fact, from what has been already observed, that a Body once put into Motion by an Impulse, will continue that Motion, or persevere in it, till it is stopt, or otherwise directed by some external Cause; but when any Quantity of Matter is put into Motion by Pressure, which is an Act of Gravity, that Motion immediately ceases, the Pressure being suspended, or taken off. In the last Case, the Action of the Cause is visibly and sensibly taken off or suspended, with regard to that particular Quantity of Matter, and in Consequence, the Motion instantly ceases; but in the other Case, of communicating Motion by Impulse, the continued Action of the Cause is not so visible or sensible: And this has induced some to think, that the Effect may continue after the Action of the proper efficient Cause in one Case, tho' not in the other; but this is very unequal Dealing, and supposing a Thing without the least Proof or Probability, or even Possibility; it is making the Cause necessary to the Effect in one Case, and not in the other. For if the continued Action of the Cause be not necessary to the Continuation of the Effect, why should any Cause be necessary at all, or why do we make any such Distinction of Cause and Effect? If Bodies may communicate Motion one to another, and persevere in that Motion for any given Time, or for ever, by any inherent Power, Property, Efficiency, or Causality

sality of their own, why should we imagine, that Matter or Motion ever began, or that Existence and Action, or the Power of Motion, are not necessary and essential to all Bodies?

§. 10. That Gravity is a continued active Force or Energy exerted upon the whole material System, is as evident as any Thing in Nature can be; and that this Force or Power of Gravity is thus continually exerted under certain Laws and Conditions of Wisdom and Reason, Contrivance and Order, cannot be deny'd: And can it possibly be supposed, that passive Matter should be endued with any such intelligent, active Power, or that Bodies should thus actuate and move themselves? I have likewise prov'd, that all the mechanical Powers, so far as we have any Knowledge or Experience of them, are the necessary Consequences and Result of Gravity; and that this being once taken off or suspended, the rest must instantly cease, and be suspended too: And from hence it must follow, that these mechanical Powers are not essential to, or the inherent Powers and Properties of mere passive Matter, and that consequently, they must arise from some extrinsic, active, and intelligent Cause, by which Matter is continually acted upon. To suppose otherwise, would be confounding proper Action, Agency, or Causality, with passive Motion, which must destroy all Distinction between Cause

and Effect, and thereby subvert all the Principles of Reason.

§. 11. What has contributed very much to this grand Error in Philosophy, I take to have been, confounding, or not sufficiently distinguishing between proper Efficiency or Causality, and bare occasional Instrumentality, or the Works of Nature with those of Art; The Want of making this Distinction has introduced great Confusion into Philosophy; and as it is a Matter of great Importance, the Reader, I presume, will excuse me, if I should endeavour to clear it up, by representing the Strength of the Argument on both Sides.

“ Any Engine or Machine, contrived, adjusted, and put together by human Art, will continue to move upon the same Principles and Powers of Mechanism, without any farther Care, Trouble, or Attendance of the Artificer: When he has done his Work, and taken his Pay for it, he is presently discharged, for the Machine afterwards, if he has made it right, will naturally and necessarily go on upon the same Principles and Laws of Motion, which at first set it a going; it may afterwards, indeed, by some Accident or other, need mending, and then the Maker, upon Occasion, may be called in again: But had the Artist been absolutely perfect, and could have foreseen all Accidents, this  
“ could

“ could never have happened: But God has  
“ made a Machine of a World or Universe,  
“ that could never afterwards require any  
“ Thing of his Presence, Power, or Agency;  
“ cy; he has no Need to mend his Work,  
“ tho’ Men may make imperfect Machines,  
“ that may afterwards need farther Care and  
“ Attendance. A Clock-maker may err in  
“ his Work, and it may be necessary to call  
“ him in again to mend it, and rectify the  
“ Faults, which he could not foresee or prevent;  
“ but God is not such a bungling Artist,  
“ and has not made a World like such  
“ a Clock as this; he has no Need to attend  
“ daily, or from Time to Time, to keep his  
“ Work in Order, like a Clock-maker.”

This is the shrewd Reasoning of those, who would exclude God out of the World, and dismiss the Deity from any farther Care or Trouble, after they had employed him in a Jobb to make the World for them, which might, in all Time to come, or to all Eternity, preserve and govern itself: They could not, indeed, do it themselves; but when the Thing was done, they had no farther Occasion for the Workman; for if he had not finished his Work once for all, so as to be set aside for ever after, it could only prove him an imperfect Contriver, and an ill Artist, not much better than a common Mechanick.

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This is all, doubtless, very good Reasoning, and true Philosophy; but, methinks, it is Pity it should pass for good Divinity: And therefore, let the Philosophers say what they please, I shall for once attempt to be a Divine, and to clear up a little better the Distinction between proper Efficiency or Causality, and bare occasional Instrumentality.

§. 12. When a Workman contrives, orders or disposes a Clock, Watch, or other Machine, it is evident, that the Artificer is not the Cause or Efficient, either of the Existence, or any of the Powers and Properties of the Materials which compose the Machine: He has only put the Materials into a certain Order, Position, and Relation to each other; and this is continued, not by any Action, but the passive Necessity of the Matter, as having no self-moving Power, and therefore, must remain *in statu quo*, till it is farther acted upon; the Weights, the Springs, and all the mechanical Powers or Attributes of the Matter, are the very same in this Order or Position, as in any other, and the Workman has effected nothing of this. Two Bodies put in *juxta* Position, and at Rest, must ever continue so, till farther acted upon, because Rest is no Action, and therefore, the Continuance of it requires no Cause or Agent; but to suppose an Action to continue after the Agent ceases to act, is as plain a Contradiction as can be. But to make the

Case parallel here, some Instance ought to be given of voluntary, intelligent Motion, where there is real Agency or Causality: The Agent is, doubtless, the Cause of his own Action; he begins, continues, or puts a Stop to it at Pleasure; and here no body would say, that a voluntary Action may continue longer than the Agent continues to act, by willing and determining it, for this would be denying it to be a real Action, or the Action of such an Agent. And to affirm, that a proper Action may continue, when the Agent ceases to act, is evidently to maintain, that there may be Action without Agency, an Act without an Agent, or an Effect without a Cause; and yet all the Philosophy built upon such a Supposition, of Bodies continuing to act without being continually acted upon, by the Presence and Power of the real Agent, or efficient Cause of the Motion, terminates in this gross Absurdity, and Subversion of all Reasoning, by destroying the necessary, inseparable Relation and Connexion between Cause and Effect.

The Sum of what has been hitherto said is this, that Motion and Rest in Bodies is not their own Act, but the Consequence or Effect of being acted or not acted upon; while they continue in Motion, they are acted upon, but while they remain at perfect Rest, they are not at all acted upon: But it is impossible to conceive any proper Action  
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or Causation without some Will, Choice, or voluntary Determination; for upon such a Supposition, mere passive, unintelligent Matter might move, direct, and determine itself; and consequently, it would not be passive and unintelligent, contrary to the Supposition. But that there is an active Force or Energy continually exerted thro' the whole Universe, and this under the strictest Rules and Measures of the most perfect Wisdom, Order, and Proportion, is evident in Fact, and can be deny'd by no Philosopher: And from hence it must necessarily follow, that this universal Force or Energy, continually exerted thro' the whole Creation, must be the Action of some universal, intelligent Efficient or Cause; and consequently, cannot be inherent in, or essential to passive, unintelligent Matter. And all this will appear yet plainer, if it can be prov'd, that there is actually in Nature a material Substance or elementary Fluid, which is not affected with any of these mechanical Properties, and which does not itself act, by any Power, Property, or Force of Mechanism: This, perhaps, may be thought very surprizing; and yet I hope to make it very clear in the next Chapter.

## C H A P. II. S E C T. I.

*Of the Nature, Properties, and Affections of LIGHT.*

I AM now entering upon a Subject of the most difficult Discussion, and yet of the greatest Importance in the Philosophy of Nature: The finest Province in the Universe, which has been the least visited, cultivated, or improv'd. Sir *Isaac Newton*, a Man of the most elevated and uncommon Genius, made several great Discoveries concerning the sensible Properties of this visive Element, with regard to the different Refrangibility of its Rays, and the different Sensations from thence arising: But he has left enough for the farther Disquisition and Investigation of future Ages.

That Light is corporeal, or a material Substance, cannot now be doubted, since all the modern Experiments and Observations about it, confirm this. By Reflexion and Refraction it may be differently resisted, and turned more or less out of its Way, according to the different Densities of the resisting or refracting Medium: Its Rays, in their progressive, rectilinear Motion, may be intercepted by the Inter-



Interposition of any opaque Object, and by removing the Obstacle, or interposed opaque Body, the Motion of the Rays proceed again in the same direct Course as before: The luminous Rays may likewise be contracted into a less, or diffused thro' a larger Space, while the Quantity of Light continues the same, and cannot be increased or diminished; as in the Focus of a Burning-Glass, where all the Rays, which would otherwise pass directly thro' the Glass, are contracted into one bright Spot, while the circumambient Space, for the Breadth of the Glass, is deprived of its Light, and left shaded. And while this happens, the Action of such Light, thus contracted and condensed, is proportional to its Quantity, and produces all the Effects of the most intense Fire, which may be made to exceed the Action of any common culinary Fire in any given Proportion, even to the Dissolution and Evaporation of Gold in a very little Time: And from hence it is plain, that Fire and Light are essentially and substantially the same, and that Fire is nothing else, but condensed Light.

But the Materiality or Corporeity of Light is farther confirmed and demonstrated, by its Loco-motion; for Vision is propagated thro' this Medium successively, and in Time, as Sound is through Air, which is its proper Medium of Conveyance from the Object to the Organ: This has been demonstrated from  
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the Immersions and Emerfions of *Jupiter's* Satellits in their Eclipses; for the Satellit having been hid behind the Planet, and consequently, the Motion of the luminating Medium betwixt the Object and the Eye, for a Time stopt and suspended, it requires a certain Time before the Vibrations or Flashes of the Medium can reach and impress the Eye; And from hence it has been demonstrated, that the Motion of the luminating Medium is propagated through a Space equal to the Semi-diameter of the Earth's annual Orbit, or to the Distance between the Sun and Earth, in about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  Minutes, which is a Velocity swifter than that of Sound convey'd in Air, in a Proportion of above 600,000 to 1. But these Things concerning the Materiality, Loco-motion, Condensibility, and Rarefaction of Light, having been sufficiently explained and confirmed by others, and being now universally allowed by the Philosophers, need not farther be insisted on here; and therefore, I shall now proceed to some other Properties and Effects of this Element, or Medium of Vision, which have not hitherto been taken Notice of, or admitted.

§ 2. It has been supposed, that all the Light which successively comes to us, is continually emitted out of the Body of the Sun, in such Sort, that a fluid Ocean of this Element, sufficient to fill and supply a concave Sphere equal to the Earth's annual Orb, is  
thrown

thrown off about eight Times in an Hour, or once in  $7\frac{1}{2}$  Minutes: This Hypothesis is, doubtless, very surprizing, and it is still more surprizing, that it should have been so generally admitted, without the least Scruple from the greatest Philosophers. But might it not be as well imagined, that all the Air, which conveys the Motion from the Object to the Organ, and excites the Sensations of Sound, that the whole Quantity of this Element, or Medium of Sound, is continually emitted out of the sonorous Bodies, as that the Medium of Vision is emitted out of luminous Bodies?

Why does not a Bell or a Drum emit all that Air out of its own Substance, which propagates the Sound to the *Ear*, as much as the Sun emits the Light out of its own Substance, which conveys the Motion of the Element, or Medium, to the *Eye*, and excites the various Sensations of Vision? I believe it would be hard to assign a Reason, why this should not be so in one Case, as much as in the other; or why the Element and Medium of Light should not be as much the standing Atmosphere of the Sun, as the Air is of the Earth, and, perhaps, of all other opaque Bodies. It might be proved from a great Number of Experiments, that the Actions of Air and Light are reciprocally and mutually dependent, and that there can be no Action of one without the other.

§. 3. It is a well-known and most establish'd Principle in all mechanical Philosophy, that the Momentum or Quantity of Motion, and all the Effects depending on it, must be ever proportional to the Quantity of Matter multiplied into the Velocity; and therefore, the Velocity remaining the same, the Momenta in all Bodies must be as the Quantity of Matter: And this being so, it is evident, that if the Quantity of Light at the Earth, and throughout the whole solar System, be still increasing in an octuple arithmetical Proportion, in any given Time, its Effects in exciting the Sensations of Light and Heat, and all other Consequences of such an increased Momentum of the Element, must increase in the same Proportion; and consequently, the Heat at the Earth, upon this Supposition, must be eight Times greater every Hour, and in the Space of a Year, the Intensity of the Action must be greater in the Proportion of above 70,000 to 1. But tho' such a Consequence must be necessary upon the present Supposition, and the common Theory of Light, yet every one must see the Falseness and infinite Absurdity of it. We must conclude, therefore, that the Quantity of elementary Light is, *cæteris paribus*, every where the same, at the same Distance from the Sun; but its Action may be more or less intense, as the Rays are more direct or oblique,



oblique, or as they receive a greater or less Impression from the Sun.

§. 4. That the Quantity of Light should be every where continually increasing, by its being incessantly thrown off from the Sun, without ever returning thither again, is, I think, demonstrably false, from what has been said; but the Nature of its Motion, and how it acts upon the Sensories, and excites the Ideas of Vision, may deserve a farther Consideration.

Any due Attention to the sensible Properties and Effects of Light, must make it evident, that the luminous Rays are in a continual vibrating Motion, going and returning to and from the resisting Medium, in exceeding short and imperceptible Intervals, which makes the Medium or Element appear at perfect Rest, without any sensible Motion at all. All Sir *Isaac Newton's* Observations and Experiments upon Light evince this quick, imperceptible Vibration or Flashing of its Rays; he has prov'd, that the incident Rays falling upon any resisting Medium, are refracted, and reflected alternately, and by Turns, so that the same incident Ray, which is refracted at one Interval, shall be reflected at the next: This is visible and sensible in diaphanous Mediums, where the incident Rays fall upon Glass, Water, Air, &c. but in opaque Bodies the Effect is not so sensible, tho' the Fact must be still the same. When  
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the Rays fall upon Glass, it is evident from all this great Philosopher's Experiments, that they are reflected one Moment, and transmitted in the next; and the same Thing must be understood of the refracted Rays beyond or behind the Glass, after their Refraction and Transmission. For as this vibrating Motion appears to be essential to Light, when its Rays are put into Motion, it must follow, that the refracted or transmitted Rays behind or beyond the Glass, by continuing their Vibration, must again be refracted and reflected by Turns, backward, as well as forward.

Any one but moderately acquainted with the *Newtonian* Theory of Light, must see the Reason and Necessity of what I have observed and advanced: And from hence it must follow, that the Quantity of Light, or of the material Element, is not increased or diminished, by all the Changes and different Directions of Motion, which the Rays undergo by Reflections and Refractions. In diaphanous or pellucid Mediums, the very same individual Rays go and return through the Medium in the same co-incident or parallel Lines, so that the Ray coming back makes the same Angle at the Eye, as when it went forward.

But in opaque Bodies, where there is no regular Refraction, the Case is somewhat otherwise; for here the refracted Rays, which enter within the Surface of the Body, after

having undergone an uncertain or indefinite Number of Reflections within the Body, are thrown out at uncertain Angles, and in various and uncertain Directions, such as no Angle at the Eye can take in; and this weakens the Light, and casts a fainter Shade of it, because in this Case, it is only the reflected Rays, which can come back again to the Eyes, while those which were refracted, are dispersed and scattered, and are thrown back in very different and uncertain Directions, which can never come to impress the Organ, or make any Angle at the Eye: And this is the Reason why diaphanous or pellucid Bodies cast a stronger Light, and more vividly affect the visive Organs, than opaque or coloured Bodies. And from hence must necessarily arise different Shades and Degrees of Light, or different Colours, as the refracted Rays within the Body are returned in a greater or less Quantity, and in different Angles to the Eye.

But I shall not now enter minutely into the Theory of Colours, or enquire, whether they are owing to any original Difference in the Rays themselves, or to the different Refractions which the same Ray might meet with, in passing thro' Mediums much denser than Air. And as the great Philosopher, whom I chuse to follow, seems to have declared for the former of these Opinions, I shall let it rest there, till farther Inquiry.

§. 5. In talking of Light and Sound, Men are often apt to confound the Sensation itself, with the Motion of the Medium, or Impression upon the Organ, by which such Sensation is excited: Thus, in a deep Calm, we say there is no Air, by which we only mean there is no Wind, Current, or sensible Motion of the Air; and yet at the same Time there is the same Quantity of Air in the same or equal Space, as under its greatest Agitation in the highest Wind, or most furious Tempest. So likewise in deep Darkness, when no visual Idea or Sensation is excited, we say there is no Light in the Room, or that all Light is excluded, while there is still the same Quantity of the Element in the same Place; but its Rays are quiescent, so as to make no sensible Impression on the visive Organs or optick Nerves: But as soon as a Window is opened, or a Candle lighted up in the Room, we imagine, that an Ocean of Light presently rushes in at the Window, or is thrown out from the Candle instantly, and in a Moment, so as to fill the Room with that Element, where was a perfect Vacuum of it before; when all that is done by the external Light, or Impression from the Sun or Candle, is only to put the luminating Element into Motion, and excite the natural Vibration of its Rays, which were quiescent, or at a sensible Rest before. In like Manner, when we talk of the Motion of



Light and Sound, we understand it of the *Elements*, and not of the Sensations: When we say, that Sound moves with such a Velocity, as to be propagated thro' a given Space in a given Time, as about fourteen *English* Miles in a Minute, it can only signify thus much, that the Percussion given by the sounding Body to the immediate contiguous Air, is communicated to the next circumambient Air, and that to the next, till the Motion is propagated to such a Distance, in a given Time, so as to impress the auditory Nerves, and excite the Sensation of Sound. And just in the same Way must we conceive of the Propagation of Light thro' the luminating, visive Element. The Sun immediately impresses the immediately contiguous Parts of its visive Atmosphere, and that the next, and so on; and this Communication of Motion thro' the visive Medium or Element is above six hundred thousand Times swifter than the Motion of Air, which excites the Sensation of Sound. Supposing then the Sun to be totally eclipsed, by an opaque Body very near its Surface, or as near as the Moon is to the Earth; upon the Removal of this intercepting, opaque Medium, it would be seven or eight Minutes before the Vibrations of Light could reach to us, and so much must we be out in the Calculation, did we not know the Cause of it, and allow for it in the Calculation. But when the Sun is totally

tally eclipsed by the Moon, as the Moon is at least three hundred Times nearer to us than the Sun, the Propagation of the intercepted Light, between the Moon and us, would not take up more than a fortieth Part of a Minute, which being little more than one Second, is so small a Portion of Time, that there is no Need to make any Allowance in a particular Equation for it, since it is next to impossible to compute a lunar Eclipse so near as this.

§. 6. All Sensation of distant Objects arises from a Communication of Motion thro' an interposed, continued Medium, between the Object and the Organ: Without admitting this, it would be impossible to account for any Sensation or Perception of distant Objects at all; and besides, I have prov'd it to be really so in Fact, with regard to the Propagation of Sound thro' the Air. It would be thought highly absurd to imagine, that the very individual Parts of the Air, which are first and immediately impress'd, by the Percussion of a Bell, or other sounding Body, that this individual Air, I say, should fly off from the Bell, thro' the surrounding Atmosphere, till it reaches the Ear, and excites the Sensation of Sound; and we are very sure, that this is not so in Fact, and that the Motion is actually communicated from one Part of the Medium to another, till it comes to impress the Organ, and excite the correspon-

dent Sensation: And the very same Reasoning, from what has been observ'd and prov'd already, must hold good with respect to Light, and the Manner of exciting Vision.

From hence it may appear, that all Sensation is from Contact or Feeling: For where the Object is not in immediate Contact with the Organ, it must affect, touch, or impress it by an interposed Medium. By this Means, the Soul perceives or feels the Object in and by the proper Organ; and thus Seeing is the Feeling of the Eye, Hearing of the Ear, &c. or which is the same Thing, the Soul perceives or feels the Sensations of Vision in the Eye, of Hearing in and by the Ear, &c. I have here said thus much concerning Sensation in general, and the Manner of exciting it, not only to remove some popular Errors, with respect to Vision, but as necessary and pre-requisite to some Things that will be farther advanced and considered afterwards: But I shall now proceed to some other Properties and Affections of this wonderful Element or Medium of Vision.

§. 7. This Element appears to be universal, and to be equally diffused thro' all Nature, or the whole Universe, wherever there are any Bodies or Matter existing: Wherever there are any luminous Bodies, tho' at immense Distances, such as the fix'd Stars, this Element is moved and actuated by them, so as to communicate the Motion and make such

such Bodies sensible to us. According to the latest Observations upon the Parallax, the nearest fix'd Stars, or those of the first Magnitude, must be several hundred thousand Times further from us than the Sun; and how much further still some of the remoter Stars may be, which are invisible to the naked Eye, but discoverable by Telescopes, is beyond all Computation, or even Conjecture: This Consideration might be alone sufficient to conclude, that material Nature and elementary Light are infinite; or thus much at least is certain, that their Bounds are absolutely unassignable, and that, consequently, they are indefinite, if not infinite.

It is evident, from all the Phænomena or sensible Appearances of this first Element, that its Parts are extremely subtile and minute, and, perhaps, consist of the very smallest and last Divisions of Matter, which being perfectly solid, are therefore unalterable into any other Form or State of Action: The extreme Subtilty and Minuteness of the Parts of this Element is evident from hence, that it can pass freely, and emerge without Resistance, thro' the Pores and Interstices of Glass, where no other Fluid could pass by the utmost, possible Force.

From what has been said, it may appear, that all other Bodies or material Substances whatever are immersed in this universal Fluid, as the common Medium and Vehicle of all  
their



their Actions and Re-actions upon each other. And amidst all the Changes and Forms successively put on by mix'd and compound Bodies, this first and most simple Element remains eternally fix'd and immutable.

§. 8. Fire, as I have said, is nothing else, but elementary Light, or the common solar Rays condensed: This is evident, from the common and well-known Experiment of a Burning-Glass. In this Experiment, the solar Rays or common Light is collected and condensed into one bright Spot, which would otherwise take up a solid Space equal to the Surface of the Glass, and its focal Length. It is true, that all the Light, which would otherwise possess this solid Space, is not concentrated or brought together into the Focus, because all the Rays which fall upon the Glass, are not equally refrangible, and some of them are not refracted at all; and therefore, the solid Space between the Glass and the Focus is not left quite dark, though very much shaded, and more or less shaded, according to the different refractive or reflective Power of the Glass: But in this Focus or burning Point we find, that the condensed or contracted Light has all the sensible Properties and Effects of the most intense Fire.

A common Pair of Spectacles in this Way will light Tobacco, dead Oak, or any Thing easily combustible: But this Force of Fire may be increased in any assignable Ratio; it may

may be made intense enough, not only instantly to melt Gold, and force it into Fusion, but in a very short Time to evaporate it, and throw it all off in Effluvia, which no common culinary Fire could ever do, though the Matter should be exposed to it ever so long.

§. 9. From what has been here observed, it may appear, that all Bodies whatever, how solid or dense soever, have a centrifugal Force from Fire, and fly or recede from it, in Proportion to the Intenseness of its Action, or the Density of the Fluid: And this I take to be the first and most sensible or essential Property of Fire, that no other Body or material Substance can exist with it, or bear its near, immediate Action. This Element, we see, so far as its Action prevails, dissolves and destroys the closest and strongest Cohesion of Parts in all other Bodies, and reduces them into such extremely minute and separate Particles, as to dispose them to evaporate, and fly off in the Air: In which we observe an essential Difference between this and all other Dissolvents in Nature, that the Substance dissolved cannot unite or incorporate with the Dissolvent, without suppressing and destroying its Action.

When Salt or Sugar dissolves in Water, Iron in Aqua-fortis, Gold in Aqua-regia, &c. the Substance thus dissolved is equally diffused and mixed with the Menstruum, so as  
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to incorporate with it, and deposite a proportional Part in every proportional Part of the Dissolvent, as the Whole of one is to the Whole of the other: But any Thing dissolv'd by Fire cannot thus mix, unite, and incorporate with it, but flies off in Vapour, or otherwise the Fire is presently extinguish'd, and its Action destroyed.

§. 10. These general Observations may open the Way to a clearer Discovery of the Nature and Properties of this wonderful Fluid, which have not yet been well considered or understood. This first Element, by which we see and feel every Thing else, and which is the common Medium and first material Principle of all Life, Sense, and Motion: This elementary Light itself lies most in the Dark, and of all the Provinces in Nature, has been least visited and surveyed. I hope, therefore, the learned Reader will forgive an Attempt of this Kind, though it should serve only to excite and encourage others to prosecute the Matter farther, and make a fuller Discovery of so useful and necessary a Part of Natural Philosophy: In order to this, I shall lay down and endeavour to demonstrate the following Propositions.

PROP. I. LEMMA.

*Elementary Light, the Rays of which being condensed, or a greater Quantity of them collected*

lected into a given Space, takes the Name, and assumes all the Properties of Fire, is an Element sui Generis, and not subject to the mechanical Laws and Properties of other Bodies, or material Fluids. This Proposition is so very evident, from all the Observations hitherto made, and will be still so much confirmed, by what follows, that I need not here more particularly insist upon it.

## PROP. II. LEMMA.

If we suppose a material Fluid endued with all the essential Properties of Matter, as before described, but void of Gravity, Pressure, vis Inertiæ, or any other mechanical Power or Property, I say, all gravitating, resisting Bodies will move through such a fluid Medium freely, and without Resistance, as in Vacuo. For since all vis Inertiæ and Resistance of Bodies, and all their mechanical Powers and Properties, arise from and are the necessary Result of Gravity, as has been already proved, where there is not this original Power, or mechanical Force, there can be no Resistance to Motion at all.

## PROP. III. THEOREM.

Elementary Light, or the Medium of Vision, is a material Fluid, void of Gravity, Pressure, vis Inertiæ, or any other mechanical Power



*Power or Property whatever, and therefore; its Action and Effect upon other Bodies is purely immechanical.* That Bodies, with regard to what we call their mechanical Powers and Properties, are purely passive, and that they do not, in this Case, properly act, but are acted upon, has, I think, been sufficiently proved already: And from hence it must necessarily follow, that there are in Nature active immechanical Powers, by which the passive mechanical Powers are moved, actuated, and exerted. I say nothing here of the Action of the Soul upon the Body, or of God upon all other Beings universally, which Action must be purely immechanical: I intend, I say, nothing of this, because I am now only speaking of a material immechanical Fluid; and that the Element of Light, or the Medium of Vision, is such a Fluid or Principle of Motion, may appear from what follows.

1. A Body affected with Gravity cannot rest in any given Position, or move in right Lines thro' a Fluid that is specifically heavier or lighter than itself: It is well known, that any heavy Solid or Fluid immersed in a Fluid of different Density, or specifick Gravity, must either rise in and swim upon the Surface, or fall to the Bottom, and rest there, as it is rarer or denser, heavier or lighter than the Fluid in which it is immersed; and if a Body be projected with any given Velocity thro'

thro' a Fluid of different Density, such a Body cannot possibly, by the Laws of Gravity, move in straight Lines thro' such a fluid Medium, but necessarily rise or fall in it every Moment of its projectile Motion. But now it is certain, that the Rays of Light are projected in right Lines thro' Air, Water, or other Mediums of vastly different Densities and specific Gravities, and this without being at all affected by their different Gravity, or either rising or falling in their projectile Motion, as they must necessarily do, were they at all affected with Gravity. It is evident, that the Atmosphere is every where replenished with this visive Medium: Now, if this Element be supposed possess'd with Gravity, or capable of being at all affected by it, it must necessarily, by the Law of Gravity, rise above it, and swim on the Surface, supposing it specifically lighter than the Air, in which it is immersed; or if specifically heavier, it must, by the same Necessity, sink to the Bottom, and lie below it; but we see the Gravity of Air does not at all affect this Element, when at Rest, nor in the least disturb its Motion in right Lines.

2. Let the common Light or solar Rays be collected in the Focus or converging Point of a reflecting or refracting Glass: By this Means, the Element may be condensed in any assignable Degree. The Rays or Quantity of Light, which would otherwise fill a cubic

cubic or conical Space, the Base of which is equal to the Surface of the reflecting or refracting Glass, are now concentrated, and collected into a small Speck or Point, called the Focus: The common Element or solar Rays thus collected and condensed, exhibit all the Phenomena and Effects of Fire, which may be continued and preserved for any given Time, and consequently, for ever, under the same Circumstances, without any Fuel or combustible Matter to consume or work upon. This is pure elementary Fire, which excludes all other Matter whatever out of the same Space, and makes a Vacuum of every Thing else. Now in this Case, condensed Light or Fire in the Focus lies, as to Sense, perfectly still and quiescent; tho' it is surrounded by the circumambient Air or Atmosphere, which is a gravitating Fluid pressing equally every Way, or in all Directions alike; yet this immechanical Element is not at all affected by it, so as to rise or fall, sink or swim in it, or in the least alter its State and Position, either of Rest, or Motion in right Lines, and which yet must necessarily happen, supposing this Element or immechanical Fluid to be endued or affected with Gravity, and other mechanical Properties of other Bodies.

Perhaps, it may be here said, that the Motion of this Element is so exceeding quick and insensible, and a fresh Supply of it coming

in every Moment, or small, insensible Part of Time, that tho' it should spread continually, and diffuse itself in the Air, this Motion could not be perceived or reduced to any Experiment. Now this is begging the Question, and perfectly unphilosophical, to assume and suppose a Fact that cannot be reduced to any Experiment; and consequently, needs no Confutation at all; yet I shall prove, *ex abundante*, that the Thing here supposed and objected, is absolutely false in Fact, and contrary to Experience.

3. It is well known, that all Fluids affected with Gravity and Resistance, press *undiquaque*, and exert a Conatus to Motion in all Directions alike; and that in Fact they will spread and diffuse themselves equally in all Directions, where they meet with no Resistance: This is the necessary Effect of Gravity, Pressure, and Resistance, and it is impossible any gravitating, resisting Fluid should be otherwise affected, or be subject to any other Law of Motion; but Light moves or acts only in right Lines, and has no lateral Pressure, or Tendency to Motion at all. This is evident, from all Sir *Isaac Newton's* Experiments about it, which would be too tedious to recount here: But that the luminous or luminating Rays have no such lateral Pressure or Conatus *ad Motum*, is manifest, from a very common and well-known Experiment, which will be here sufficient just to observe.



Let a Beam or small Stream of Light be, let into a dark Room, through a narrow Hole; this Stream of Light will be propagated directly in a straight Line to the opposite Wall, or till it meets with some Resistance, where the Vibration or Motion of the Element can be carried or propagated no farther: In the mean while, all the Parts of the Room without, or beyond the direct Progress of the Rays, are left dark and shaded, without any sensible Motion of the Element, so as to affect the optic Nerves or visive Organs; which Observation and Experiment demonstrates the Rays have no lateral Action, or Power of Motion, and consequently, that they do not press or gravitate, either upon each other, or upon the circumambient Air. For let us suppose this Stream of Light to be such a Quantity of Air, Water, or other mechanical, gravitating Fluid, let into a void Space, capable of receiving and containing more of it; and it is evident, that any such gravitating, pressing Fluid would spread and diffuse itself equally and every Way through the whole Space, so far as it met with no Resistance. And the Case must necessarily be the same with regard to Light, were it a mechanical, gravitating Fluid, capable of Pressure and Resistance.

4. All gravitating, resisting Fluids, when they meet with any Obstacle to their direct progressive Motion, will, by their lateral Pressure,

Pressure, turn off from their direct Course, till they have passed beyond the Obstacle or resisting Object, and then being at Liberty, will fall into the void Space behind, and go on in the same Course again, as before it met with any such Resistance. Thus Water, in passing thro' the Arches of a Bridge, being resisted by the Peers, will pass thro' the intermediate Spaces, and as soon as it is got beyond, it will fill the same Channel as before, and flow on in the same Course: And when it is pent up into a narrower Canal, its Velocity is increased reciprocally, as the Section, and then flowing into a wider Canal, will spread itself again, and assume its former Velocity. But the Case is quite contrary in the Motion of Light, which never falls into the Shadow beyond the Obstacle where its Motion was stopt, and resisted in the direct Course: And therefore, the Parts of this Element do not gravitate or press upon each other, or upon the circumambient Air, and consequently, it does not act by any mechanical Power or Property.

5. That the Rays of Light, in their progressive Motion, or Action in right Lines, do not press, interrupt, resist, or at all disturb each other, is evident, from the Nature of Vision, and all common Phænomena and Appearances, in Fact and to Experience: These visive Rays come from every Point of Space, and terminate in every other Point, that can

be within the Sconce or optic Angle of any Eye. Thus, two Men standing at a Distance, and looking directly at each other, they see one the other at the same Instant of Time, and by Rays acting in contrary Directions without Resistance: And any Number of other Men standing in any different Positions, might see the same Men in the same Instant, by Rays which must cross and intersect each other in all possible Angles, and this without interrupting, or in the least disturbing or confounding the Action of Light. But with regard to Sounds, which are conveyed through a gravitating, resisting Medium, we find the Case perfectly different; for here a Multitude of Sounds from different sonorous Bodies, or coming to the Ear in many different Directions, cannot be distinctly heard or distinguished: For the Undulations of the resisting Medium mixing with, and disturbing each other, confuse the Sensation, and throw all together indistinctly and indiscriminately to the Sense. Thus, when a Multitude or great Concourse of People are talking all together, it makes a confused Hum or Murmur to the Ear; whereas the Eye can perceive them all, or any one of them, distinctly and without Confusion.

§. 11. These Considerations, I think, very clearly and sufficiently demonstrate, that Light, thro' which Vision is conveyed, is an unresisting Medium, and consequently, that it  
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does not press, gravitate, or exert any mechanical Power. I had proved before, from another Principle, *viz.* the absolute Passiveness of Matter, that Gravity, Pressure, Resistance, Retention of Motion once impressed, and all those Affections of Bodies, which we call their mechanical Powers, are not intrinsic or essential to them: For since Matter is purely passive, and can move only as it is moved, or act as it is acted upon, it follows clearly, that that active Force or Energy that we observe throughout the whole material System, must be the Action of some extrinsic, non-essential Cause. But we now see, that there is, actually and in Fact, a material Fluid or Substance in Nature, that is not at all possessed of or affected by any of those mechanical Properties and Affections of other Bodies: And this, as a Matter of Fact and Experience, may go farther, and be more convincing, than any Reasoning *a priori* could do.

§. 12. I have frequently, in the foregoing Sections, mentioned the Vibration or progressive Motion of the visive Rays; but it may well be questioned, whether this may be compared to the Undulation of Air and Water, the Oscillation of a Pendulum in going and returning, or any such reciprocal Motion of Bodies forward and backward, thro' the same Space: But this Motion of the Rays, by which Vision is excited, is more probably



analogous to the vibrating or tremulating Motion of a stretch'd String, or musical Chord, which, when struck or impress'd any where, propagates its Vibration or Tremulation thro' its whole Length, till the Motion is stopt, or interrupted and broken by some intervening Obstacle or Resistance: This Motion or Vibration of a musical Chord is propagated through the whole Length so very quick, as to be imperceptible. It must not, however, be concluded here, that I suppose these luminous Rays to be so many solid cohering Strings or Fibres; it is sufficient to this Purpose, if it is a continued Fluid void of all Gravity or Resistance to Motion, such as I have already proved this immechanical Element or visive Fluid to be. For in this Case, the Motion could be only propagated in right Lines, and must cease upon the least Resistance of an interposed Medium. The Curvature or Bending of a Ray of Light, upon the least Resistance in passing into a different Medium, and its recovering the same straight Line again in emerging into the same Medium, is very like the Action of an elastic String or Chord; and yet it is certain, from what has been observed, that this is not the gravitating, mechanical Elasticity of other Bodies, and that the Action of this Element is purely immechanical: Any Quantity of it, as we see by Reflection or Refraction, may be collected into a very small Space,

Space, and retain'd there for any given Time, without exerting any Effort or Conatus towards regaining its *Æquilibrium* with the circumambient Light or Air, as all gravitating, mechanical Fluids necessarily do, and must.

When a Ray of Light has been bent, or turned out of its Course by Reflection or Refraction, the same Ray, through its whole Length, assumes the same right Line, and the Object is seen in a straight Line from the reflecting or refracting Point: And this again is wonderfully analogous to the Nature and Properties of solid, inflexible Fibres or Wires. And yet it is certain Fact, as has been already proved, that the Parts of this Element have no Cohesion, and make no Resistance to any intervening Bodies, tho' collected in ever so great a Quantity, in the converging Points of refracting or reflecting Glasses. But to imagine that this Fluid, how much soever condensed, is of no assignable Quantity, with respect to Air, Water, or any other known gravitating, resisting Fluid, because it discovers none of those mechanical Properties, this, I say, is a Supposition contrary to all Nature and Reason: Whoever considers its vast Effects, and that it is capable of dissolving the strongest and closest Cohesion of the most dense and solid Bodies, cannot think it of very little or no considerable Quantity. But the just and necessary Consequence from

it is, that not being endued with Gravity, Resistance, or any mechanical Property, its Quantity of Matter cannot be mechanically computed, or its Effects mechanically accounted for: This ought to be considered by those, who are for resolving all the Powers and Effects of Nature into mechanical Causes. It is certain, that the mechanical Powers themselves cannot be owing to any mechanical Cause, since this would be assigning the same Thing, as the Cause of itself.

§. 13. How this immechanical Fluid acts upon other Bodies, and exerts and determines their mechanical Powers, I no more pretend to explain, than how the Soul acts upon the Body, or the Mind upon Matter; But we are sure, that this is not done by Weight, Pressure, Resistance, Impulse, or any mechanical Power or Property whatever. It is very reasonable to suppose, that there must be some Medium of Communication between the mechanical and immechanical Powers of Nature, or between Mind and Matter, Thought and mechanical passive Motion; and if so, this immechanical Element or material Fluid has the best and only Claim to its being such a Medium and Instrument of Communication between the spiritual and corporeal, or the active and passive Part of the Creation, An Hypothesis might be laid down, which would pretty well account for it, how this Communication is made between the mechanical

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nical and immechanical Powers, by Means of a material Element, or universal Fluid, which is in itself purely passive, and void of Gravity, or any other mechanical Property: But I would not here indulge myself in Conjectures, or advance any Thing, but what may be proved, as plain and evident in Fact. That the elementary Light, or the visive and calefactive Fluid, is endued with all the essential Properties of Matter, but not impressed, or acted upon by any mechanical Power, is, I think, sufficiently clear and demonstrable, from what has been observed and evinced in this Chapter. And from hence, what I chiefly aimed at, must be admitted, that all Matter is in itself, or its own intrinsic Nature, purely passive, and that Bodies, in exerting the mechanical Powers, do not act, but are acted upon: This being allowed, it will necessarily follow, that there must be some universal Agent or Cause of Motion, that is active, intelligent, and free, and the Impressor of all mechanical Force and Impetus.

From what has been observed and proved, I presume, it may appear clear enough, that the material World is governed and directed by Reason, Wisdom, and active Power, and that Bodies, with respect to their Powers and Properties, commonly called *mechanical*, do not act, but are acted upon, or are not active in this Respect, but purely passive: And this being admitted, it must follow, that there is  
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some active, intelligent Power continually exerted upon the whole material System.

§. 14. This gives one an Occasion to consider, what may be meant by a *general Law*, or the Laws of Nature, so far as they regard the necessary mechanical Powers, Properties, and Actions of Bodies, and the established Rules and Principles of communicating Motion: For it is a very material Question, whether God gave these original Powers and Properties to Bodies, by an original, simple Act of Will, or whether he still continues to impress and act upon them, by the same Force or Energy as at first impressed? This important Point deserves a more particular Discussion; for I think all *moral Atheism*, among speculative, unprejudiced Men, has been founded on a System of natural, philosophical Atheism.

A *general Law*, if it means any Thing, must signify a Law or Rule of Action, or a Principle upon which an intelligent Being, who is a Governor and Director of Things, has determined and declared, he will act: I am speaking now of the necessary mechanical Laws of Motion; and we do not find these altered, suspended, or set aside upon any particular Occasions and Emergencies. The Laws of communicating Motion from one Body to another, are the very same now as ever, and we can have no Reason to think, that the Author and Director of Nature will

ever alter his Measures, or interpose for mending his Work, as if he had not contrived and set Things right at first.

But then it must be considered, that what we call Mechanism and the necessary Laws of Nature, is the free Agency and continued Energy of the Author and Director of Nature. I think I have sufficiently proved, that Matter is purely passive, and that it does not act, but is acted upon; but then the Cause or Agent acts, and cannot be acted upon: For this would be to suppose every Thing, or the Whole of Nature, to be Effect without any Cause, or first Mover at all. The necessary Motion of Bodies, therefore, and all the Laws and Forces by which it is communicated and preserved, must be supposed to be the continued, regular Will, Choice, and free Agency of the Deity, or first universal Cause and incessant Mover and Preserver of Nature.

Any other Supposition must terminate in Atheism, or the necessary Self-Existence and regular continued Motion of mere unintelligent passive Matter, without any active Power, Wisdom, Contrivance, or Direction at all.

§. 15. Ascribing the universal Force and Energy, by which the whole material World is incessantly acted upon and moved, to the mere passive Matter, as the inherent essential Powers and Properties of the Bodies themselves, is in Effect

Effect to exclude the Deity out of the Universe, and to render his Existence and Causality at first, as well as his continued Presence, Power, and Agency, precarious and needless. If we may suppose passive unintelligent Matter to continue its Existence and Action by its own inherent Powers, without the continued Presence, and Action of the Author and Director of Nature; I say, if we can suppose this of the Bodies themselves but for any Part of Time or for one Moment, we may as well, and with the same Reason suppose so in all Time, or for ever, without Beginning or End. For this is supposing mechanical Bodies are naturally and inherently endowed with active, independent Powers, or that they really and intrinsically act, and are not continually thus moved and acted upon. And this being supposed, the other Supposition, that active Powers and Properties were at first communicated is perfectly needless, and a mere Compliment to the Deity, after all farther Presence, Power, or Agency of God in the Creation had been set aside as unnecessary. A World that is sufficient to preserve, govern, move, and direct itself by its own inherent Powers, Principles, and Laws of Motion, cannot, with any Reason, be supposed to be dependent on any other, or to have deriv'd its Existence from a prior Cause. What we call the mechanical Power and Laws of Nature, or the Laws of communicating Motion, must

must be free Agency in the Deity, who is the real efficient Mover and Director of all; and these Motions are only necessary with regard to the passive Matter, which is thus moved and continually acted upon.

Because God acts by general Laws, and does not frequently alter the Rules and Measures he had prescribed to himself, therefore it has been supposed that he does not really act at all in these Cases, and he now as much ceases from acting in Nature, as he ceases from creating new Worlds, or from working Miracles. And he must, it seems, suspend or alter the Laws of Nature, or act against them, if he would convince Men that he acts at all, and that he has not given an intrinsic independent Power of Motion to passive Matter, and made a World that is for ever after capable of subsisting and acting without him. But were this true Philosophy or just Reasoning, I should be able to discover no Difference, or no defensible Difference between such Sort of Deism and Atheism itself. Such Philosophers have only made a Deity to do a Jobb for them, and then to be discarded and set aside, as no farther useful or necessary in the Creation. And this physical, philosophical Atheism, as we shall see afterwards, has been the real Cause and Ground of introducing a Scheme of moral Atheism; in which, the continued Presence, Power, or Agency of God in a preserving and governing Providence,



dence, has been, in Fact, overthrown and set aside. When we say that God acts by general Laws, the Meaning surely cannot be, that he does not act at all, or that he has given Bodies an independent Power of acting without him, or that those general Laws themselves, considered as the inherent Powers and Properties of passive Matter, are the Agents by which all Motion is communicated, modify'd, and directed. And yet, as absurd and unintelligible as this would be, such strange Suppositions often pass for good Philosophy and just Reasoning. And, by this Means, while Men have lost and bewilder'd themselves in an infinite Maze of imaginary second Causes, the first, and only true efficient Cause of Nature has been discarded and set aside, as having nothing to do with the present Government of the World and Direction of Things. And this physical Atheism has been extended to the intellectual and moral Parts of the Creation, as if the Deity did not now act or concur at all in the Management of Affairs, but left every Thing to the Contrivance and Direction of blind, impotent, and yet, it seems, independent Mortals. But the setting this Matter in a clearer Light, and proving that God acts by general Laws with a true Causality and Efficiency in the animal, rational, and moral World, as well as in the natural, will be the Business of the next Chapter.

## CHAP. III. SECT. I.

*Of human Nature, and the general  
Laws of Sensation and Intelli-  
gence.*

THE Faculties and Affections of *human Nature* may be distinguished into the *animal* and *rational*, or *sensitive* and *intellectual*: These are two perfectly and essentially different Powers, Modes, or Qualifications of Action; or, if you please, Modifications of Existence.

Of the animal or sensitive Causes, the principal, or the Origin and Foundation of all the rest, are the external, organical Senses; which intirely and absolutely depend upon Matter and Motion. So far as any Experience or Observation can go, all *Sensation* is *organical*, and arises either from an immediate Contact of the Object and Organ, or from a Motion communicated and impress'd through a certain Medium interpos'd between the Object and Organ of Sensation: And from hence all *Sensation* is in Reality *Feeling*, though the Object and Organ be at ever so great a Distance; for the first Impression and Modification from the Object to the Medium  
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being propagated to the sensitive Organ, it is felt and perceived by the sensitive Nerves. Thus, Seeing is the Feeling or Sensation of the Eye or optic Nerves, Hearing of the Ear or auditory Nerves, and so of the rest. For take away the Medium of conveying the Motion, or let the Organ be any way indisposed and out of Tone, so as not to receive the modify'd Motion communicated from the Object, and no Sensation can arise. And from hence it is very evident, that organiz'd, modify'd Motion, is immediately and necessarily connected with *Sensation*, if it be not the very Thing itself. This must be, so far as our Observation and Experience can carry us, and beyond which I pretend to nothing.

What we call, therefore, the *sensitive Soul*, or the passive Faculty and Capacity of *Sensation*, is either a certain Modification of organiz'd, impress'd *Motion*, or something necessarily connected with it, and inseparable from it, and which cannot, according to the present established Laws of Nature, exist without it.

How far the Deity may, some Time or other, alter and reverse this Law, and make Sensation or the sensitive Soul independent of Matter and Motion, we cannot pretend to judge; but as the Case now stands, every Nerve throughout the Body seems to be *sensitive*, or capable of having Sensation impress'd

press'd upon it, by a certain Modification and Organization of Motion: And to imagine, that these Sensations are subjected in another Substance or Soul situated in some little Corner of the Brain, or elsewhere, or not situated at all, so as to be *tota in toto* & *tota in qualibet parte Corporis*, tho' it might pass for good Philosophy, would be scarce common Sense; or thus, when a Man complains, that his Head akes, or his Finger smarts, these Propositions, tho' they might be sensibly, could not be philosophically true; for it is not his Head that akes, or his Finger that smarts, but his Soul akes in his Head, or smarts in his Finger: And upon this Supposition, we might have all the same Sensations, tho' we had no Body or material Organs at all. But does this sensitive Soul grow and increase, or enlarge and contract itself with the animated Body or sensitive Organs? Is the Soul of an Embryo or Animalculum *in semine* enlarged from a few Grains to as many hundred Weight, or extended from the millionth Part of a Grain of Sand to five or six cubic Feet? Or when a Leg or an Arm is cut off, is there so much of the Soul diminished? This has greatly puzzled and perplexed some Philosophers, to account for what is really unaccountable, how Sensation should be subjected in another Substance, that is essentially distinct from and independent of the sensitive Organs themselves; or how a Pain in a Fin-



ger or Toe should be a Pain of the Soul in the Head, when it is evident to all Feeling and Experience, that the Nerve is equally sensible all thro', from one Extremity to the other, wherever the Impression is made. That a Pain felt in any particular Part of the Body, is not in that or in any other Part of the Body, but in another Substance, essentially distinct from and independent of all organiz'd Matter and Motion, is hard to believe: And it is wonderful, that so many Philosophers, who are the great Asserters of Fact and Experience, should give into a Notion, or bare, unprov'd Hypothesis of Faith above Reason.

§. 2. Any Man, with a little Attention, will see, that all these Sensations arise from, and are necessarily connected with organized Matter and Motion, modified and directed by the sensitive Nerves. That the Nerves are the Organs and Instrument of Sensation, I think has never been denied; and therefore, I could not be guilty of Heresy even in Philosophy, for asserting this. But that the Nerves are the proper Subjects of Sensation, all Divines, and most Philosophers, would deny: For my own Part, I have no Prejudice one Way or the other, and do not know, that I could get or lose any Thing by it, on which Side soever the Scale might turn; but I would willingly put it to the Trial of Fact and Experience, so far as that might weigh with any Man's Judgment; and upon this Trial,

Trial, I doubt, I might have a hundred to one against me; but this would be no great Matter, I should be only where I am. But however this may be, I shall venture to produce some Facts against a common Hypothesis.

1. Let a Nerve be tied, or a strong Ligature made any where between its Origin in the Brain and spinal Marrow, and its Extremity terminating in the Muscles: In this Case it is certain in Fact, that the Muscle, and all the Parts in which this Nerve terminates below the Ligature, are immediately deprived of all Sense and Motion: What becomes now of the sensitive Soul in all the Parts below or beyond the Ligature, where the Communication is cut off from the Brain and spinal Marrow? Does the Soul, in this Case, desert the Parts thus affected, and contract itself upward for a free Access of Air, as Fish would do in Water, by getting to the Top, when they could have no vital Air at Bottom? In this Case it is evident, that even Fish under Water cannot live without Air, and being intirely cut off from all Communication with the Atmosphere or external Air, they must necessarily perish, and lose all animal Life, Sense, and Motion.

2. Instead of a Ligature between the Origin and Extremity of a Nerve, let us suppose the Nerve to be obstructed in its Origin, in which Case, the external Impression of the Object upon the Organ cannot be made, or

the impress'd Motion communicated from one Extremity of the sensitive Organ to the other: This is, undoubtedly, the Case of the optic Nerves in a Cataract, and probably, in a *Gutta serena*, where the Nerves are obstructed, and the Communication with the external, vital Æther intercepted. And this may be applied to the Loss of Hearing, where the external Communication to the auditory Nerves is cut off, and the Impression cannot be conveyed thro' the Nerves, by Reason of some Lodgment of indurated Matter within the Tympanum or Origin of the auditory Nerves: When this happens, the Deafness is incurable, if the obstructing Matter cannot be dissolved and carried off, so as to leave the Communication of the externally impressed Motion free and open through those Nerves, from one Extremity to the other. Thus, a Nerve or Muscle in which it terminates, may lose its Sense and Motion, either in Whole or in Part, according to the Nature and Degree of the Obstruction or intercepted Motion; where the Obstruction is at the Origin in the Brain or spinal Marrow, and the Communication with the external, elastic Æther intirely cut off, the Organ is perfectly deprived of all animal Life, Sense, and Motion. And this, as I said, may happen in any less or lower Degree, for Reasons already hinted, and which are obvious enough.

§. 3. From what has been observed, it is evident, that the Nerves communicate with an external, elastic Medium, which is absolutely necessary to their Life, Sense, and Motion: And that this vital, respirative Medium is the elastic Air or Atmosphere, I think, cannot be doubted. The vital, sensible Action or Motion of all the Muscles in general seems perfectly analogous to that of the Lungs in Respiration. We can have no better Way to come at the more secrete and recondite Works of Nature, than by Analogy taken from the Manner and Mechanism of her most obvious and sensible Operations.

I have elsewhere proved at large, that the Lungs act as a Muscle, and that this primary muscular Engine is the true Antagonist to the intercostal Diaphragm, and the other Muscles employed in Breathing: The Mechanism and Method of Nature in the alternate Dilatation and Contraction of this grand muscular Organ, by the successive Immission and Emission of the elastic, vital Air, is sufficiently obvious and sensible. And from hence we may conclude, by a just Analogy, that all the other Muscles respire a very subtle, elastic Æther through the Nerves, tho' this Operation of Nature by the respiratory Nerves is not so obvious or sensible to us. The Formation and Structure of a Muscle, in which the ultimate Branches and last Divisions of the Nerves which supply it, termi-



nate in an Infinity of small Vesicles, like the last Divisions of the Trachea in the Lungs, would strongly incline one to conclude, that as the Contrivance and Mechanism, so the Intention of Nature must be the same in both, though the Operation itself in one Case may be more recondite and insensible, than in the other. But this is not a bare Supposition or Conjecture from Analogy only; for there are many Observations and Experiments, which tend to confirm it. We find, when a Nerve is tied, or a strong Ligature made, so as to intercept all Communication of the external, vital Æther with the Muscle, it remains without Sense or Motion, and just in the same Manner as the Lungs must do, in Case the Trachea was tied, *i. e.* dead and breathless.

In Worms, Reptiles, Aquatics, and such imperfect Animals as have no Lungs, an open, free Communication of the Brain and spinal Marrow with the external, elastic, vital Æther is absolutely necessary to animal Life, Sense, and Motion. It has been found by Experiments, that if the Spine and Parts from which the Nerves are sent out, be lined or covered with a glutinous, adhesive Substance, so as to intercept and cut off the Communication between the Nerves at their Origin and the external Air, the Creature presently loses all Sense and Motion, or dies suffocated.

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It has been observed by the Curious in that Way, that even Plants and Vegetables have their Air-Bladder analogous to the bronchial Vesicle, by which they receive and emit fresh Air, and perform a Sort of Respiration; and without this, all vegetable, as well as animal Life and Motion, must be destroyed. That the Air is necessary in both these Cases, is very evident; and from the Analogy of Nature, the Simplicity of her Principles, and the Uniformity of her Works, one would be apt to conclude, that the Mechanism and Intention or Use are much the same; but as Reptiles, and Creatures without Lungs, need less Respiration than pulmonary Animals, and the vegetable Life and Motion less than either, the Author of Nature has provided for this, and contrived and adapted the Mechanism of such Bodies accordingly: But from the Analogy, Simplicity, and Uniformity of Nature, in all her Works, we may pretty safely conclude, that the Principles upon which she acts, as well in her more secrete and recondite, as in her more obvious and sensible Operations, are the same. I have said thus much of animal Mechanism, because of the Connexion it must have with other Parts of this Treatise, and as natural and moral Philosophy mutually illustrate, and throw Light upon each other; for no right Judgment can be made of moral free Agency, without understanding the Nature, Power, and Extent

of the Sensations, Appetites, and Passions, with regard to which we are purely passive. I shall, therefore, now proceed to consider a little farther, these animal Faculties and Affections, which make so great a Part of human Nature.

§. 4. Besides these external, organical Senses already taken Notice of, there are many other internal Sensations, or Modifications of Pleasure and Pain, which we call the Appetites, Instincts, and Passions of Animals: The Creature, with respect to these Appetites and Instincts, is purely passive, and performs no Action nor exerts any active Power at all, no more than Bodies in the necessary passive Motions to which they are subject.

The Appetites of Hunger and Thirst, the Impetus and Stimulus to Procreation, the natural Passion for and Love to the Off-spring, by which all Creatures are moved and impelled to take Care of their Young, till they are capable of providing and shifting for themselves, and the Impression of Pain that immediately arises from any organical Hurt or Injury to the Machine, in its natural Organization and Structure; these are the general Laws of Nature, which extend to every Animal or sensitive Creature of every Kind. And no body can imagine, that in any Thing of this, there is any Action of the Individual, or any Judgment form'd either of Sense or Reason, from any former

former Observations, Experience, or Comparison of Ideas.

§. 5. These animal Sensations, Appetites, and Instincts, therefore, as they are natural and necessary, must be *innate*, or co-eval and co-existent with the Animal or sensitive Creature itself, since one cannot conceive of an Animal, or any animal Life and Motion, without them. In this, therefore, I am forced to differ from that great Philosopher and Master of Reason, Mr. *Locke*, who denies and argues against all innate Ideas in general, and of every Kind: He supposes the Soul originally to be as a *rasa Tabula*, or Blank without any Impression, or distinguishing Character at all, which would be either nothing, or nothing that we can conceive or form any Notion or Idea of; but a Man of his Penetration, and Strength of Judgment, could not but see some Defect in this Reasoning, and that the Word *Idea* here was too general; and therefore, in prosecuting the Argument, he silently changes the Term *Idea* for *Principle*, and then proves very clearly, that we have no innate Principles, Perceptions of Truth, or Judgment of Reason, or no innate Ideas of Reflection: All this is acquired gradually by Observation and Experience, and by comparing one Thing with another, in the several Relations, Reasons, and Proportions of Things. In these Acquisitions and Improvements of Reason, Understanding



ing, and Judgment, Men are vastly different, according to their different Capacities, Opportunities, Attention, and Degrees of Application; and nothing of all this is innate, or born with us. In almost every Thing else, I must own Mr. *Locke* as my Master, and the first Guide and Director of my Understanding: But as this justly celebrated Philosopher, in this Case, might seem to have used the Word *Idea* in its most general Acceptation, so as to include all the original, simple Impressions of Sense, Appetite, and Instinct; I thought it necessary to remove such a Difficulty or Prejudice, lest the Authority of so great a Man, mistaken and misapplied, might lead others into Error, and darken and perplex, instead of clearing up the Truth to them. It would be equally contrary to Experience, and the present Constitution of Nature, either to suppose, that the Ideas of Sense, Appetite, and Instinct are not innate, or that the Perceptions of the Understanding, or the Judgments and Conclusions of Reason are so.

§. 6. But to return to our Subject: It may be observed, that besides those Sensations, Appetites, and Instincts already taken notice of, as above, and which are equally necessary to the Preservation and Propagation of the Individuals of every Species; there are other Appetites and Instincts, or Modifications of Pleasure and Pain, that are peculiar to the  
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Organization and Make of the Individuals of different Species: And thus we may see, that there are peculiar and specific Differences of Appetite and Instinct in Creatures of different Kinds, intended to stimulate and impel them to such Actions, as are most necessary to their Well-being, and which, by their Make and Organism, they are design'd and fitted for. And hence we see, that Ants, Spiders, Silk-Worms, &c. are strongly impell'd by Appetite and Instinct, or the different Modifications of Pleasure and Pain impress'd upon them, to such Actions, as, in the Intention of Nature, may best answer the End and Use of their Creation and continued Existence.

No Man can imagine, that Bees, Spiders, Silk-Worms, &c. should have acquired such Dexterity or Skill by Observation, Experience, Reflection, or any Use and Judgment of Reason; because we plainly see, that all these wonderful Things are done, and the Effects produced by the natural, necessary Impulse of Appetite and Instinct, and which otherwise no human Reason could ever investigate or accomplish. But this is the Wisdom and Reason, not of the Creature, but the Creator, and the general Law by which he governs and directs the unintelligent or irrational Part of the Creation.

§. 7. In all these Appetites and Instincts, or different Modifications of Pleasure and Pain,

Pain, by which mere Animals are determined, without forming any Judgment or Conclusions of Reason, we may observe, that the Pain, Stimulus, or Uneasiness of Appetite, always precedes and anticipates the Pleasure of Gratification; and this Pain or Uneasiness of the Appetites is the true and only Motive or Impetus, which determines the Action, and by which the general Law is enforced and secured; and then, the consequent Pleasure which results from the Action, is the natural Reward of Obedience, or Compliance with the natural Law. This is the Government of animal Nature, and a Demonstration, that the Deity, or universal Cause, in directing the animal Part of the Creation, acts by general Laws, from which he never swerves, on the Account of particular Reasons, or unforeseen Incidents.

§. 8. Now, who can sufficiently admire this Government and Direction of Nature, by general Laws, such as being constantly and steadily acted upon and kept to, may obtain and secure the best Order and Constitution of Things upon the Whole, without obliging the Deity, or Author of Nature, to suspend his Laws, or alter his prescribed Rules and Measures of Action, by frequently interposing on particular Incidents and Emergencies? One of these argues the most perfect Wisdom, Foresight, and Contrivance; whereas the other must necessarily  
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imply Weakness, Imperfection, Uncertainty, and Want of Foresight.

We do not find, that the Deity, or universal Cause and Agent, ever suspends or alters the mechanical Properties of Matter, the Laws of communicating Motion, the Forces and Directions of the heavenly Bodies, the natural Sensations, Appetites, and Instincts of Animals; or, in a Word, any of the general Laws of Nature, or prescribed Rules and Measures of his Agency, to answer particular Ends and Purposes, which may be supposed not to have been foreseen or sufficiently provided for. Such a Supposition would be unworthy of God, as the Creator and Governor of the World, and the universal Cause, Preserver, and Director of Nature.

I think I have sufficiently proved, that what we call the Laws of Nature, as taking Place throughout the whole material Creation, are nothing else, but the Rules and Principles of eternal, immutable Wisdom and Reason, upon which the Deity, or Author of Nature, continues to act, and incessantly exerts his active Power and Energy: And if this be so in the material World or System of Bodies, no one, I think, from what has been said, can doubt, but the Case is the very same with regard to the animal Part of the Creation.

§. 9. Besides the Sensations, Appetites, and Instincts originally impress'd, and which may  
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be deemed innate or connate to the animal Nature itself, or to Man, considered only as an Animal, we may observe a certain Progress or Improvement of these original Impressions, which is acquired by Experience, Use, and the frequent Occurrence and Return of the same Objects and Sensations: This I would call a Judgment of Sense.

It is evident to all Observation and Experience, that the brute Creatures improve in the Use and Application of their Sensations, Appetites, and Instincts, by Age, Tuition, and repeated Trials. A managed Horse, a tutored Dog, an experienc'd, practis'd Hound, an old hunted Hare, &c. become more sagacious and expert in their different Ways and Methods of acting, than young, unpractis'd Creatures of the same Kind.

But this Judgment of Sense, as it is grounded intirely on sensible Impressions, can be carried no farther than these Sensations, Appetites, and Instincts will admit: And, therefore, we find, that all the Improvements and Advances of this Kind are limited within certain Bounds, and soon come to their Acme and *ne plus ultra*; and no Brute or mere Animal ever gives the least Sign or Discovery of a reasoning Faculty, which has Truth or the abstract Nature, Order, and Relation of Things, or moral Fitness of Actions for its Object: But it is not so with respect to the human Mind or Intellect, which has a superior

rior Faculty or Perception of the Understanding, as perfectly different and distinct from all animal Sense, Appetite, or Instinct, as one Sense can be from another.

No brute Creature ever discovers any Sense or Perception of the abstract Relations, Reasons, Order, and Proportion of Things. A Dog or a Monkey perceives every Thing, that is barely sensible, in a fine Picture, a beautiful, well-proportioned Structure, or any curious Piece of Art; but he sees and perceives nothing of Beauty and Order, the Art, Wisdom, and Contrivance of the Thing. A Cow or a Deer turned into a fine Park, or the most beautiful Enclosure, is presently struck with the Freshness and Goodness of the Grass or Herbage, and falls to its Food with Eagerness and Delight; but it sees not and admires not the artificial Beauty, Order, and Proportion of the Trees and Walks, the curious Dress and Behaviour of the Company, or any Thing that requires an abstract, intellectual Perception and Judgment of Reason; and yet the Beast sees and perceives every Thing in all this, that can be the bare Object of Sense.

We see, that the Author of Nature has given all Creatures proper Instruments and Organs to discover and exert the Faculties he has endued them with, and implanted in them; and if he had endued the Beasts with any reasoning Faculty or intellectual Perception,

tion, we cannot doubt, but he would have furnished them with proper Organs of Speech, or enabled them by some Means and Signs or other, to communicate their abstract Ideas of Truth, Order, and Proportion, Congruity and Fitness of Things. But tho' a Parrot, for Instance, may be taught to speak so far, as to pronounce articulate Sounds; yet he can never be taught the rational Use of Language, or instructed in the Principles of Arithmetic, Geometry, or any Art or Science whatever: But a Man or human Creature, though born deaf and dumb, and consequently, never obtaining the Use of Language, yet he soon discovers his abstract, intellectual Ideas of Things, and his Capacity for Arts and Sciences.

All Sense is very narrow and limited, as being only suited to the present State and Circumstances of the Creature, with regard to the Necessities or Conveniences of the animal Life, beyond which the bare animal Faculties and Affections can have no View or Design; and therefore, we find, that the brute Creature, how well soever taught and instructed, soon arrives to the utmost Perfection, and can be carried no farther: But Truth, which is the Object of the Understanding, is actually infinite, and cannot possibly be limited or bounded; and consequently, the Faculty which has this for its proper and natural Object, must be capable of being farther

farther and farther improved, and extended *in infinitum*, without Limitation or Bounds.

§. 10. All our Sensations, Appetites, Instincts, and animal Passions, have an evident and necessary Connexion with and Relation to organized, modified Matter and Motion, and exist successively in Time and Place, which are the necessary, essential Attributes of Matter and Motion: With respect to the Sensations of Pleasure and Pain, in which almost all our Ideas and Impressions of Sense, Appetite, and Instinct terminate, as they are all agreeable or disagreeable, pleasurable or painful, these are evidently local and moveable, and admit of Parts, Quantity, and the different Degrees of Intensity and Remission, or the several Gradations of more or less, which are the Properties and Affections of Matter and Motion.

A Pain in the Head is not a Pain in the Finger or Toe, though the same Pain may move successively, and exist in different Parts of Time in one Part or another. All the Affections and Attributes of Matter are proportional to the Quantity of Matter thus impressed or affected: The Gravity, Resistance, Pressure, or moving Forces of any Quantity of Matter are made up of the like correspondent Forces of all the Parts taken together. In like Manner, the Pleasure or Pain affecting any of the sensitive Nerves is proportional, *cæteris paribus*, to the Parts or Quantity



of Matter affected; and in this Case, the Degrees of sensitive Pleasure and Pain correspond exactly to the Intensity or Remissness of the impressed Motion upon the sensitive Organ; and as some of the nervous, sensitive Organs are of a finer and more delicate Structure and Make than others, they are, accordingly, more or less impressible with Pleasure or Pain, from the same Quantity or Degree of organized, modified Motion. A small Impression of Motion upon the Eye, or any tender, delicate Organ, will be more sensible, than a stronger Impression on a sensitive Organ of a coarser, denser, and less moveable Constitution, Make, or Structure: And this shews, that all the Sensations or Modifications of animal Pleasure and Pain are proportional to the Quantity of Motion impressed, and the Capacity or Susceptibility of the sensitive Organ to receive it; and where the Properties or Attributes are the same, as has been here proved, it is very reasonable to conclude the Subject must be the same, and that all Sensation, Appetite, and Instinct, are the Attributes and Affections of organized Matter, and arise from the different Forces and Directions of the organized, modified, impressed Motion.

§. II. In this Way of Reasoning, a Difficulty seems to arise from the apparent Place of the Sensation, where the Object, from whence it arises, and by which the Motion

is modified and impressed, is external, and at a Distance from the sensitive Organ; for in this Case, the apparent Place of the Sensation is at the external Object, and not in the Organ which receives the Impression. The Sensations of Colours, Sounds, Smell, Taste, Heat, and Cold, and in general, all the Ideas and Impressions of external, sensible Objects, are referred to the Place of the Objects themselves; in a Judgment and Appearance of Sense: And this occasions the vulgar Error of ascribing those Sensations to the external Objects, by which they are impressed, as if they were real Attributes and Properties of those Objects themselves, and not Affections of the sensitive Nerves within us. Thus, Colours, Sounds, Tastes, Odors, &c. which are really Sensations or Affections of the sensitive Nerves within us, are referred, as to Time and Place, to the external Objects, where the modified Motion begins, and by which it is impressed upon the Organ.

These Phenomena may be thought great Difficulties in Philosophy, and yet they are easily accounted for, by the general Laws and Analogy of Nature. It is well known to those, who understand the Laws of direct, reflected, and refracted Vision, that the apparent Place of Objects themselves is often vastly different from their true and real Place: In a plain Speculum or Looking-Glass, the Object appears just as much be-

hind the Glass, as it really is before it; and any Angle of Reflection or Refraction in the Rays of Light, different from the Angle of Incidence, will alter the apparent Place from the true one, and represent the Object in a Place, where it really is not.

These Laws of Vision, with respect to the true and apparent Places of external Objects, being commonly understood, afford no Matter of deep Speculation or Wonder: But how the true Place of a Sensation, which is really subjected in the sensitive Nerve within us, should be referred to the Object without us, may deserve a little farther Consideration. That all Sensation from without, arises from an organized, modified Motion, communicated from the Object thro' the Medium, and impressed upon the Organ, or Subject of such Sensation, is too plain, from common Experience, and from what has been observed already, to need any farther Proof: This Impression of organized, modified Motion upon the sensible, nervous Organs, is, for ought I know, the very Sensation itself; or if not, the Sensation is something necessarily arising from the organized Motion, and absolutely dependent on it, according to the present established Laws of animal Nature, and so far as any Observation or Experience can go. Thus, the Sensations of Colour, Sound, Taste, Smell, and all sensible Impressions from without, are perceived not in the Sensory

sory and impressed Organ itself, which is its true Place, but at the Object where the Motion begins, and from which it is communicated; and this Place of the Object, which is the Cause of the Sensation, is the apparent or sensible Subject and Place of the Colour, Sound, &c. This holds universally true, in Fact and to all Experience, in all our Sensations or sensible Impressions from without; and was it not so, we could receive no Notices or Informations at all of any Thing without us; all our Sensations would be considered arising immediately and fortuitously within us, without any known, external Cause: For were the Sensations of Colours, Sounds, Smells, &c. to be perceived only in the Sensory within us, which is its true Place, it would be impossible to know or judge of any Thing without us; and external Bodies, which are the Causes of such Sensations, could not be their Objects. But this would destroy all the Laws of animal Sense and Motion, and dissolve the whole Constitution and Order of Nature.

§. 12. How, or after what Manner the Sensation, which is really subjected in the Sensorium or sensitive Organ, as its true Place, comes to be referred to the external Object, as its apparent Place and Subject, will be best conceived, by applying it to the Laws of Vision, which are more commonly known, and better understood, than those of



the other organical Senses, which give us their Notices of external Objects, as the Causes and first Movers in such Impressions.

It is well known, that the Rays of Light proceeding from every Point of the visible Object or Objects, are projected upon the Retina of the Eye, and there form a distinct Image, or exceedingly minute Landskip of the Object or Objects in View: In this Projection, every Point of the Image or Landskip, where the Rays terminate, has the same proportional Distance and relative Position, as in the external Objects themselves, from whence it is projected; and the interposed Medium unites the one with the other, and continues the Motion or Impression from the Object to the Organ. By this Means, the sensitive, nervous Organ feels or perceives the Motion thro' the whole intermediate Space, and the apparent Place of the Sensation is at the Object, where the Motion begins, and the Rays terminate: Now here it is plain, that if this Termination of the Rays, and Beginning of the impressed Motion, was not the apparent Place of the Sensation, the Object could not be seen, nor its relative Distance, Magnitude, Figure, Position, &c. known or judged of at all; and the like must happen, if the Sensation of Sound was not to be referred to the sounding Body, of Smell to the odorous Body, &c. In this Case,

Case, the external Body might be the Cause of the Sensation, but could not be the Object of it, and the Motion would be impressed, and the Sensation excited, by something or other, we know not how or where.

Since then, there are the same proportional Distances, Quantities, Motions, and relative Positions, in the Image projected on the Retina, as in the Objects themselves, and since there is an actual Communication of Motion from one to the other, thro' an interposed Medium; from hence we may conceive, how a small Point in the Retina may be connected with a large Surface in the Object, at a great Distance, and how the Motion or Change of Position, in any Point of the projected Image, may be very great and considerable, at the Place and Distance of the Object. Thus, when any Number of Lines are drawn from the Circumference to the Center, tho' their Distances are every where proportional, yet they come nearer and nearer towards the Center; there an angular Point shall be proportional to a Line at the Circumference: And thus, a very large Country may be projected on a small Surface, in a Map, where a hundredth Part of an Inch shall be correspondent and proportional to a Mile or a hundred Miles, in the Surface thus projected. And as the Sensation arising from the Motion impressed, by such a Projection on the Retina, is not perceived in its true

Place, the Sensory itself, but its apparent Place, the Object, it is there seen under the Proportions, Magnitudes, Positions, and Motions of the Objects themselves, at their real Distance and optic Angles.

To make this clearer, it may be considered, that all the Names and Denominations of Quantity are relative Terms, and our Ideas of them purely relative: There is nothing absolutely great or small, far or near, swift or slow, finite or infinite, but relatively only or proportionally. Thus, a hundredth Part of an Inch is a small Length or Distance, in Proportion to a Mile; that greater Distance is very small in respect to the Diameter of the Earth, which is again very small and inconsiderable with respect to the Diameter of the Earth's annual Orb; and this last, which is so exceeding great in Comparison to the rest, is still very small, and but an insensible Point, with regard to the Distance of the fixed Stars; and thus, what is infinitely great and unassignable, with respect to one Quantity, may be infinitely small, and of an unassignable Minuteness, with regard to another: And from hence we may observe, that the Author of Nature has adjusted our Sensations upon the Laws and Principles of the most exact Geometry, Reason, and Proportion; and these general Laws, which he had prescribed and settled, as the Rules and Measures of his Agency, at the first Constitution  
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of Nature, he constantly and steadily adheres to, without ever swerving or deviating from them on particular Occasions or Emergencies, which had not been foreseen or sufficiently provided for, by the general Law or original Constitution of Things: This would plainly argue Weakness, Imperfection, and Want of Foresight, and would be charging the infinite, omniscient, and omnipotent Deity with human Defects and Infirmities; but we find, that God never alters the established Course, Order, and Laws of Nature, to answer any particular Ends or Purposes, not foreseen and provided for in the general Law and Rule of Action: He does not suspend the Weight and Force of a Stone in falling, that would otherwise dash a Man's Brains out, or stop the natural Course of a River to prevent its overflowing and drowning a Country; nor does he suspend or alter the general Laws of Sensation, Appetite, or Instinct in Animals, to prevent any particular Inconveniences that might sometimes arise from them, or be occasioned by them. The universal Cause acts by the general Laws of Wisdom, Order, and Proportion, for the Good of the Whole, and does not consider Individuals, as separate from or independent of the Whole: Such a Notion of the divine Agency would be both unphilosophical and immoral.

§. 13. What has hitherto been advanced and observed, may serve to explain the general



ral Laws of Sensation, Appetite, and Instinct in Animals; but there is another Part of human Nature of a quite different Kind, and not subject to those Laws of mere passive Sensation and animal Instinct: Every one will see, that I here mean the rational Nature of Man, which includes Intelligence, active Power, and free Choice. The Object of Intelligence, Intellect, or Understanding, is general, abstract, and reflex, such as arises from the Perception of the Order, Reason, and Proportion of Things, and the several Relations and Respects of one Idea to another, and not in the simple Perception of the original Ideas themselves, as they arise passively from the Impression of Objects, by necessary organized Matter and Motion. These general, abstract Ideas of Intellect and rational Reflexion are the Acts and Workmanship of the Mind, and are not ready formed, and sent in from without. The Mind, in forming these general Ideas by Reflexion and Abstraction, and thereby perceiving and comparing the Order, Reasons, and Proportions of its original, simple Ideas, acts the Part of a skilful Artist or expert Workman. An Artist, out of a few rude, unformed Materials of Wood, Brass, Iron, &c. by considering the original, mechanical Powers and Properties of the Matter, contrives and puts them together in such Manner and Form, as to constitute and construct some curious Engine

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or Piece of Mechanism, in which every Part, Spring, and Motion, has a necessary Relation to and Dependence on the Whole, and of which any Part being broken or disordered, must affect the whole Machine, so as to frustrate its whole Design and Use. Now here is Wisdom, Art, Contrivance, and intelligent Agency discovered, of which nothing appeared before in the rude Materials, as they lay, without Order or Connexion, in a confused, independent, irregular Heap. Thus, the Mind or Understanding, by abstracting, comparing, and compounding its original, simple Ideas, which are the Materials sent in by the organical Senses, or passively excited by the Appetites and Instincts, by variously ordering, disposing, and arranging them, so as to discover their general, abstract Relations and Proportions; by this Means, I say, the Mind forms them into general Propositions, raises Theorems, draws Consequences and Conclusions of Reason from them, and disposes these abstract, comparative Perceptions, into complete Systems of Arts and Sciences. This is what we call Reasoning, and the abstract Ideas of Reflexion or general Truths, which differ as much from the original, particular Ideas of Sensation, as a Proposition from a Sound or Colour, or as a Syllogism from a Milk-Pail; that is, they differ *toto genere*, and are essentially of a distinct Order; and this Distinction or different Class  
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and Order of Ideas is so necessary to be well considered and understood, that without it, no Man can reason right, or talk intelligibly about any Thing.

§. 14. I had before considered our Ideas of Sensation, and the several Modifications of bodily or sensitive Pleasure and Pain, and shewed them to be plainly Affections and Attributes of organized Matter, and to arise from impressed, modified Motion: By this modified Motion the Organ is animated, and becomes the proper Subject and Place of the Sensation; I say, its true Place, for its apparent Place or Subject is the Object itself, where the Motion begins.

But now in this other Class or Order of abstract, reflex Ideas, or intellectual, rational Perceptions, the Case is quite otherwise; for these have no Relation at all to Matter and Motion, as existing successively in Time and Space. A general, abstract Truth is not perceived, as existing in Time and Space, or considered, as being here or there, or as existing now or then, like a Figure, Colour, Sound, &c. We never perceive Truth, as subjected in Matter, as moving *de Loco in Locum*, or as any Way, objectively or subjectively, affecting the external, organical Senses. And from hence it is evident, that these rational, intellectual Perceptions or Ideas must have a Subject, that is perfectly and essentially distinct from Matter; for was the Sub-  
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ject of these Perceptions material, or did they exist in Matter, they must be apprehended and considered, as existing by successive Motion in Time and Place: This is constantly and universally so in all the Affections, Properties, and Attributes of Matter. Bodily or organical Pleasure and Pain, Figure, Magnitude, Colour, Sound, &c. having a necessary Relation to Time, Space, and Motion, in all our Perceptions of them, must, therefore, certainly and necessarily be subjected in Matter, as its proper Attributes and Affections; but all our rational and intellectual Perceptions of Truth, and its various Compositions, Connexions, and Respects, having no Relation or Connexion with Matter and Motion, must as certainly and necessarily belong to another Subject essentially distinct from Matter, *i. e.* a Mind, *rational Soul*, or intelligent Being: And this I take to be a Demonstration of an immaterial, intelligent Being or Mind essentially distinct from Matter, and which must therefore be independent on any particular Organization of Matter and Motion.

But what is commonly called the sensitive Soul, or Subject of Sensation, is nothing but animated Matter, which, under such particular Organizations and Energy of impressed Motion, conceives and retains such or such Sensations or Modifications of Pleasure and Pain. These Modifications, therefore, of Matter and Motion,



tion, with their impressed Energy, being either suspended for a Time, or totally destroyed, the correspondent Sensations must necessarily be accordingly suspended, or destroyed with them.

I have already observed the essential Difference between *Sensation* and *Intelligence*, and that brute Creatures, though they may have the one in Perfection, yet give no Marks or certain Indications of the other; for how quick and sagacious soever they may be in their Motions and Actions, to which they are necessarily and naturally impelled by their Appetites and Instincts, for their own Preservation, and Propagation of the Species, yet they can never be brought to reason or discourse upon abstract Ideas, intellectual Perceptions, or general Truths; they cannot be rationally argued out of the Gratification of any present strong Impetus, or Stimulus of Appetite; they may be restrained by Force, but not by Reason, because Force affects and impresses the Senses, as Argument does not. A Dog, indeed, will refrain from any Thing, which had given him great Pain, or endangered his Life before, as he will fly from a Stick or Whip, which he had felt the Pain and Smart of: But this or any other Instance that can be given, of Caution and Sagacity acquired from Experience, by the Brutes, resolves itself into Sense and mere organical, material Impressions, but proves nothing at all

all of Intelligence or mental Perception, in the rational, discursive Way.

§. 15. A Mind or intelligent Being, therefore, as essentially distinct from Matter, is the Subject of all *free Agency, moral Government, or rational Conduct*: And here I say, that rational, intelligent Beings, as well as mere animal and sensitive Creatures, are governed and directed by *general Laws*. *Intelligence*, as well as *Sense*, has its natural Laws and Boundaries, which it cannot pass; and these Laws are the Will and established Constitution of the Deity, acting constantly, steadily, and uniformly upon the Principles of perfect Order, Truth, Wisdom, and universal Good. Whatever may appear to us evil, irregular, or wrong in the Creation, can respect only Individuals, considered as separate from or independent of the Whole. This I take to be the first Principle and Foundation of all Morality and Religion; for he who considers only instrumental, secondary, and occasional Causes, and takes the Parts as independent on the Whole, while he is censuring, condemning, and finding Fault with every Thing, must throw the Blame ultimately upon the supreme, first, and universal Cause, the Author, Contriver, Sustainer, and Manager of all Things. But this is taking the Government of the World out of God's Hands, and censuring him in the Conduct of his Providence, for every Thing that he effects

effects and brings about, by such Means and Instruments, as we do not like or cannot approve of: But such Malecontents ought to know, that God governs the World, and directs all Affairs, not by particular and occasional, but by general, uniform, and established Laws; and the Reason why he does not miraculously interpose, as they would have him, by suspending or setting aside the general, established Laws of Nature and Providence, is, because this would subvert the whole Order of the Universe, and destroy all the Wisdom and Contrivance of the first Plan: And therefore, he does not interpose, by his own immediate Power, to set aside the general Laws of his moral Government, with regard to rational, free Agents, any more than with regard to brute Creatures, the natural Elements, or the heavenly Bodies.

Natural Good, Pleasure, or Happiness upon the Whole, as appearing to the Understanding, from the Nature and Consequences of Things, is the necessary Object, or Subject Matter of all rational Will or Choice. A Man can chuse and pursue nothing, but under the Notion or Appearance of Good; and to chuse Evil, as such, is as great a Contradiction, as a forced or compelled Choice; in which Case, a Man could not be said to chuse or act at all, but would be a mere passive Sufferer.

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No Good, how great soever it may be in itself, or appear in bare abstract Reasoning, can ever move a Man to the Choice and Pursuit of it, till he comes to desire it, to make it a Part of his *own Happiness*, and feels himself uneasy, and under a painful Anxiety in the Want of it: This Pain or Stimulus of Desire is the only Motive to Action in the Pursuit of Happiness. No Man can be moved or determined, by the Happiness of another, or by any speculative Appearance of Good, to chuse and pursue a Thing, as his own Good or Happiness, which he does not desire, or feel the Want of: Any Arguments that might be used with him, antecedent to this Uneasiness of Desire and Sensibility of Imperfection, Misery, and Want, would be but lost and thrown away upon him. Desire, therefore, which is Pain or Uneasiness, in Proportion to the Strength and Degree of it, is the first and general Motive of all our Actions in the Choice and Prosecution of any apparent Good; and no Man would take Pains, or give himself any Trouble, for obtaining a Thing which he does not desire, or feel the Want of: This, then, is a necessary, fundamental and general Law of all intelligent Beings, capable of any Increase or Diminution of Happiness, and which God never suspends or alters, to serve any particular Purposes.



The Choice and Pursuit of *natural Good* or Happiness is what we call *moral Good*, and the Choice and Pursuit of *natural Evil*, Pain or Misery, is *moral Evil*, Falshood in Action, or wrong Practice. And hence it is evident, that no Man, as rational and free, can act wrong, but from an antecedent wrong Judgment, mistaking Good and Evil, and chusing and pursuing one instead of the other; since it is plainly impossible, and contrary to the Nature and Reason of the Thing, that a Man should chuse Evil, Pain, or Misery as such, or refuse and fly from real Good, knowing or judging it to be so; for this would be supposing a Man to be a rational, intelligent Agent, and yet not to be so at the same Time.

But here a very obvious and material Objection arises: For if no Man, as a rational, free Agent, can chuse and pursue Evil, as such, or as so appearing to his Understanding, and if this be an established Law of intelligent Nature, how comes it about, that Men so often chuse and pursue their own Misery and Ruin, and act so directly contrary to their own Reason, Judgment, and Conscience, as they themselves are ready to confess? How could any Man ever blame and condemn himself, as acting contrary to his own Knowledge and Conscience, if he had done nothing, but what he then thought right, reasonable, and fit, in Pursuit of Happiness?

Now

Now a clear Solution of this will serve to remove many Difficulties and Disputes concerning Mens moral Conduct, and Government of themselves. It must be considered then, that Man is a compound Being, consisting of animated Flesh, as well as Spirit, or a sensitive, as well as a rational Soul, Subject, or Principle of Action; and where Sense and Appetite are strong and overbearing, they often force their Way, and hurry a Man on by mere animal, brutal Impetus and Impulse, without Reason, Thought, or Consideration. A Man's Reason and sober Reflexion is suppressed, and in a Manner quite lost and extinguished for the Time, while his brutal Powers, the animal Appetites and Passions, on the Objects presenting themselves, take fire, and run away with him; but as soon as the Man cools and comes to himself, and has Leisure for a little sober Reflexion, his Reason presently reproaches and condemns him, for thus giving a Loose to his Appetites and Passions, which he might have checked and restrained: And herein lies the whole Art of Self-Government, in maintaining the Dominion and Authority of Reason against Sense and Appetite.

This, then, is the Case, when a Man acts contrary to sober, deliberate Judgment, and cannot plead Want of knowing better; he does not really think, consider, or form any Judgment of Reason about it at all at that

Time: He commands his Reason to be silent, and resolves not to hearken to or regard it, while he lets loose the Reins of moral Government in the Gratification of his vitious, irregular Appetites and Desires. But no Man here can pretend to any Force or Compulsion upon him, or that he was not free and voluntary in what he did: If he be a Slave to his Appetites, he makes himself so, and can lay the Blame no where else; he cannot plead, in this Case, either Ignorance or Inability, and must, therefore, be necessarily self-condemned, and must justify any adequate Punishment he receives, either from God or Man.

Here, then, the Liberty and Virtue of a moral Agent lies, in exerting his utmost Force of Reason against the Gratification of any such Appetites and Desires, as are vitious, unjustifiable, and destructive of Happiness, and which he sees and knows to be such: While he does this, he may be sure of the Victory, and cannot fail of Success; for as he cannot, in this Case, plead Ignorance, so neither can he pretend to any Thing of Coercion or Compulsion upon him: He must here own the Charge, that knowingly and voluntarily, without any Thing of Force or Compulsion, he yielded himself a Captive to the Enemy of God and Man, and gave himself up as a Slave, by Consent, to his destructive Lusts and Passions.

But

But the most plausible and only justifiable Plea or Excuse for wrong Conduct, or moral Falshood, is Ignorance, or Error of Judgment. Where this is really the Case, it excuses so far, as that a Man cannot be self-condemned, and the worst Conduct may be consistent with Honesty and a good Intention: This was *St. Paul's* Case, while he persecuted the Christians, as Subverters of the Law, and Teachers of a new and false Religion; and this is, no Doubt, the common Case of the ignorant, deluded Populace under the Papacy, while they are burning, destroying, and exterminating the Hereticks, for the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Souls. The Plea of Religion and Conscience is always urged, by Bigots, Enthusiasts, and the most furious, zealous Persecutors, and grand Disturbers of the Peace and Happiness of Mankind: And if such a Plea might be admitted, and intitle Men to a Reward from God for Evil-doing, there is no Doctrine or Practice, how absurd or mischievous soever, but might be justified and cleared off upon the Score of Religion and Conscience. The Question, then, here is, what Rule or Criterion of Truth we have in such Cases, and how far Sincerity and a good Intention may justify Men in moral Falshood, or wrong Practice. But as this is a Matter, which will require a farther Discussion, it must be the Business of the next Chapter.



## CHAP. IV. SECT. I.

*Of active Power, and Liberty, or  
free Agency.*

**M**ANY Philosophers and learned Moralists have said a great deal upon this Subject, but I shall reduce it all to a few general Heads, and endeavour to let the Reader see, where the Stress of the Argument lies, what the different Opinions of the Learned have been, and what Judgment he is to form about it.

Any Man, by reflecting on his own Actions, and attending to what passes within him, must find, that the particular Order, Succession, Connexion, and Disposition of his Ideas, and the external Motions of his Body, as thus or thus modified and directed, are, in great Measure, within his own Power, and under the Command and Direction of the Will. Thus, he can turn his Thoughts from one Object or Matter of Consideration to another, and dispose his Ideas into this or that Order, Connexion, and Arrangement, at Pleasure; and thus a Man can walk or stand still, sit or rise, speak or be silent, and move the Parts and Members of his Body, which are

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the Organs and Instruments of voluntary Motion, in this or that particular Direction, and with a greater or less Degree of Force and Impetus, as he pleases: And this gives us the Idea of active Power, and of Liberty or free Agency. So far as any particular Order, Connexion, or Appearances of Ideas in the Mind, or Modifications of Motion in the Body, depend on a Man's Will or Choice ordering and directing it, so far he is active and free; but where this Dependence on Will or Choice ceases, and the Impression or Motion is not at all determined by Will or Choice, there a Man is only passive, he does not act at all, but is acted upon. Now it is evident, that any such natural, physical Power of acting must necessarily suppose and imply a Power of not acting, or of forbearing that Action; for otherwise it would be bare passive Motion, and not acting at all: And therefore, where this physical, active Power, or Power of acting or not acting ceases, Necessity takes Place, and a Man is no longer free, no longer an Agent, but a passive Sufferer or Recipient only.

All this is clear enough, and no Difficulty can arise, while we consider Action only with regard to the bare simple physical Power of acting, to which it is most immediately and necessarily related: But besides this simple physical Power of acting, every Object of Will or Choice must have its natural, ne-

cessary Qualifications, as such an Object, and without which it cannot be a Matter of Will or Choice at all. Where any Act of Will or Choice is of any Consequence, so as to be denominated Good or Evil, the Object of it must be something in itself eligible or desirable, or it must at least appear so to the Mind. The discriminating Choice or Preference of what is not in itself eligible or desirable, is a plain Contradiction, since it is supposing the same Thing to be a Matter of Choice and Preference, and yet not to be so at the same Time. And therefore, to say that a Man cannot discriminately chuse or prefer, what is not in itself, or does not appear to him eligible or preferable, is only saying, that he cannot in any Instance act upon two contrary Suppositions at the same Time, which would be plainly impossible in the Nature and Reason of the Thing itself: But this Impossibility does not arise from the Idea of Power, but from the natural *Inconsistency* or *Repugnancy* of the Thing. Nothing can be admitted as possible, which includes repugnant Ideas, or two contrary Suppositions, that must mutually destroy each other: To say, that a Thing not in itself eligible, or not appearing so to the Mind, cannot be chosen, argues no Defect of Power, any more than saying, that a Thing is impossible with regard to Power, which cannot be done, or which no Power is adequate to; or any more,

more, than it would argue a Defect or Imperfection of Knowledge, not to know what cannot be known, or is not knowable. And thus, when we say, that it is impossible the three Angles of a right-lined Triangle should be more or less than two right Angles, or that a Cone should be more or less than a third Part of a Cylinder of the same Base and Altitude; this Impossibility does not arise from our Idea of *Power*, active or passive, but from a natural Inconsistency and Repugnancy of Ideas, where two Suppositions must be made, that mutually destroy each other. Thus, when we say, that it is impossible for God to lye, to deceive, or to do Evil; this is not impossible, with regard to bare simple physical Power, since it requires no more Power, physical Ability, or Strength, to lye, than to speak Truth, or to do Evil, than Good; and therefore, that God cannot deceive, or act arbitrarily, foolishly, and unjustly, is not owing to any Want or Defect of Power, but to the necessary Perfection of his Wisdom, Truth, and Righteousness: And yet it is as certain and demonstrable, that it is impossible for God to act weakly or unjustly, as it is, that any Being, with regard to physical Power, should do, what he has not the physical Power of doing; because such a Supposition of God's acting weakly and unjustly, must destroy another unavoidable Supposition of his being necessarily wise, righteous,



righteous, and good, and that he cannot, in any Case, mistake the Truth, Reason, and Fitness of Things.

It may be here urged, perhaps, that Wisdom, Truth, and Rectitude of Action, are not necessary and essential to the Deity, and that God acts wisely, righteously, and conformable to Truth, not from any necessary Perfection and Rectitude of his Nature, but only from free Will and Choice, when he is as much at Liberty to act otherwise, and to do wrong, as right. But if this be the Case, how would such Philosophers prove or demonstrate, that God will always do right, or that he may not as well evince and manifest his Power and Liberty, by doing wrong? For if the Deity be here equally at Liberty, and the Supposition implies no Impossibility or Contradiction in Nature, it can never be proved or made certain, that it is not really the Case in Fact, or that God may not act in direct Contradiction to all his natural, necessary Attributes and Perfections: But surely, moral Liberty and free Agency ought not to be maintained in Opposition to Nature, Truth, and Reason. And this, I think, is plain, that no rational, intelligent Being or Agent can chuse, act, or determine himself contrary to the necessary Law of his own Nature, or contrary to the natural, necessary Qualification and Condition of an eligible Object: For such a Determination would not  
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be a rational, intelligent Choice, but either a blind, ungovernable *Chance*, or a like blind, unintelligent *Necessity*, both which are inconsistent with, and repugnant to the general, natural Law of intelligent Agency.

The better to understand and apply this, it must be considered, that all intelligent, active Power, in its Use and Exercise, is subject to, and restrained by the general Law of intelligent Agency, which no Power can controul or counter-act; and by this Law of intelligent Agency, every such Action must have a capable and duly qualified Object. And thus, every Act of discriminating Choice or Self-Determination must be terminated on some Object, that is either absolutely and in itself, or at least apparently, and to the Understanding of the Agent; good, reasonable, and fit, and consequently, eligible; and to act or chuse otherwise, would not be rational, intelligent Choice, but blind, ungoverned, unintelligent *Chance* or *Necessity*. This is very plain to me, and, I think, must be too evident to any one, who reflects upon it, to need any farther Proof.

Now from hence it may appear, that *active Power* and *Liberty*, or *free Agency*, tho' they are nearly allied and related, yet they are not precisely and determinately the same Thing, or the same Idea. So far as a Man can act or not act, will or nill, chuse or refuse, without any Controul, superior Agency

or Coercion, so far, I say, he is certainly a physical Agent, he acts, and is not passively acted upon: But yet in this Case, he is not always at Liberty to suspend or forbear the Action; for Instance, a Man has a necessary Good, or a most desirable, delectable Object in View, and which is in his Power, and proposed to his Choice, as connected with his Happiness; he accordingly loves and delights in it, and in Consequence, wills and chuses it, as a necessary Good to him, and naturally connected with his Happiness. In this Case, a Man certainly acts freely, with regard to the Exercise of his physical, active Power, and is not forced, compelled, or acted upon; but yet, methinks, no one should say, that he is equally at Liberty to hate, reject, or nill such an Object, as he is to desire, will, and chuse it. A Man cannot, by any active Power or free Self-Determination, be at Liberty not to desire, chuse, and pursue Good, Pleasure, or Happiness; or not reject and fly from Evil, Pain, or Misery: For this is the necessary Law of all animal Nature, both Rationals and Irrationals. The brute Creatures, who cannot chuse and pursue intellectual Good or Happiness, from the abstract Nature, Reason, and Consequences of Things, are yet necessarily determined by Sense, Appetite, and Instinct, to the Choice and Pursuit of Pleasure, and to shun and fly from Pain; and a Creature not sub-

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ject to, and determined by this Law, could have neither Reason nor Sense, Intellect nor Appetite and Instinct. Now this being so, it is evident, that what some have seemed to contend for under the Notion of *free Will*, viz. a Liberty of Indifferency, with regard to Good and Evil, Pleasure or Pain, Happiness or Misery, is contrary to the general Law of Nature, which directs, governs, and determines all Creatures universally, both rational and irrational: But such a Supposition and Notion of Liberty must terminate in blind *Chance* or *Necessity*, and is inconsistent with all conscious, intelligent Agency.

§. 2. From what has been advanced and proved in the last Section, it appears, that all Creatures universally, that are endued either with Sense or Intelligence, are subject to a general Law of Action, by which they are constantly and unavoidably governed and directed, in the Choice and Pursuit of Pleasure or Happiness, and the shunning or avoiding Pain or Misery. And from hence some have concluded, that there can be no such Thing as Liberty, or moral, accountable Agency, and that in Reality there is no Difference between natural and moral Government: And thus, while some contend for an absolute, unbounded Liberty, or uncontrollable Power of acting and chusing or refusing, which is indifferent to Good or Evil; others, on the contrary, deny all Liberty



erty or free Agency, as the moral Foundation of Praise or Blame, Reward or Punishment; and maintain the absolute, inevitable Necessity of all our Actions. The Reader, I believe, will be apt to look upon these, as two opposite Extremes, neither of which can sit very easy upon the Mind; and both must appear equally absurd; and contrary to all Sense and Experience.

But as both these Extremes have been espoused and maintained by Men of great Learning, known Abilities, and unquestioned Probity, who have discovered no corrupt Bias or Prejudice, in favour of their own Opinions, but profess to seek Truth in itself; and for its own Sake, and to be ready and willing to embrace it as such, wherever they could find it; this, I say, must be an evident Proof, either of the great Difficulty of the Subject, or else of a wrong Method of Inquiry, and false Principles taken up with about it: And as I take this latter to have been the Case, I shall enter the deeper into this Matter, and endeavour to search and clear it up to the Bottom; in order to which, it will be necessary to consider, tho' briefly, yet distinctly, the Rise, Force, and Influence of our several Appetites, Instincts, Propensities, and Passions, as they either precede or follow any Judgment of Reason or Choice, and Direction of the Will.

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Now here it is evident, that all the bare animal Appetites, Instincts, and Propensities in general, as they are natural and necessary, so they precede and anticipate any Judgment of Reason, or any Choice, Direction, or Preference of the Mind: They arise from the natural Frame, Structure, and Constitution of the animal Machine, and from the necessary Impressions of Objects upon it, and cannot be altered or differently modified, by any Choice of the Mind, or Power of the Will. Thus, Hunger, Thirst, Lassitude, Propensity to Rest, Sleepiness, Desire of Coition and Procreation, Self-Preservation, Love of the Species, and especially of the Issue or Offspring of the same Individuals; these and other such like Appetites, Instincts, and Propensities being natural and necessary, any Determination or Action upon these, without a superior Principle of Judgment and Direction, must be likewise necessary. And here we may observe, that all these natural Appetites consist in certain Degrees and Modifications of Pain or Uneasiness; the Removal of which Uneasiness, or Impetus and Stimulus of the Appetite, Instinct, or Propensity, by gratifying the Appetite with its proper Objects, gives a Pleasure, which is always proportional to the antecedent Pain. And thus, all animal Motion or Action is a Transition from Pain to Pleasure; and this Pleasure lasts no longer, than the Gratification, or till the  
Appetite

Appetite has been fully satiated with the Object; and after this, any farther Use of it terminates in Pain again, and impels the Creature to the Disuse, Rest, or Relaxation, as the first Pain or Stimulus of the Appetite had prompted to the Gratification.

Here, then, we have the true and only Principle of Motion or Action in the Brutes; when a Beast, for Instance, feels the Pain and Stimulus of Hunger, and is thereby moved or impelled to his Food, this Action, though spontaneous, and in that Sense free, as not being externally forced, is yet as necessary, as the Motion of a Body, when impelled by an extrinsic, moving Force acting upon it: For the Creature having no other Motive, Principle, or Rule of Action within himself, must gratify the Appetite in its full Extent, or till the Pain is removed, and cannot regulate the Gratification, by any Judgment of Reason from the abstract Nature, Fitness, and Consequences of the Thing: And this may be applied to all the other Appetites, Instincts, and Passions in the brute Creatures, the Case being every where the very same.

As this shews and explains the true Principle of Action in animal Nature, so it may serve to remove a Difficulty or Objection, which some have made concerning the Usefulness and Necessity of Pain: They consider all Pain as an Evil, and from thence argue,

argue, that there is more Evil than Good in Nature, or more Pain than Pleasure. But it is evident, from what has been observed and proved, that Pain, in the Constitution of animal Nature, is as necessary as Pleasure, and that there could be no Motive, Principle, or Spring of any Action, Gratification or Enjoyment without it: Take away the Impetus and Stimulus of the natural Appetites and Passions, as the Motives and Incitements to all Action and Enjoyment, and all organized Creatures, Man not excepted, must remain for ever in a State of Indolence, Inaction, and Sleep, without any Spring, Motive, or Inducement to Action at all; in Consequence of which, the whole Beauty, Order, Use, and Excellency of the Creation, must be destroyed. This Objection, therefore, against Pain, as a Defect in the Creation, or a redundant, unnecessary Evil upon the Whole, can only arise from Ignorance, wrong Judgment, and the Caprice of a most unnatural, false Philosophy. To admit the Objection, as grounded upon any Thing of Truth or Reason, would be to condemn God and Providence, and to subvert or destroy the fundamental Principle of all Morality and Religion: For if any Thing be evil, irregular, unnecessary, and ill ordered, upon the Whole, the Reflection and Blame must rest upon the Author, Contriver, Preserver, and Director of the Whole; and then it would be a wretched

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Shift,



Shift, indeed, to blame the Creature for the ill Management and Government of the World. But it would be impossible even for God himself, to please such capricious Philosophers and self-willed Reasoners, since the only Fault, it seems, is, that God has made a World, and directs all Affairs upon such Laws and Principles of Agency, as they cannot approve of.

§. 3. In the last Section, I considered such natural Appetites, Instincts, and Impressions, as necessarily arise from the animal Constitution, and the Impression of Objects, antecedent to any Judgment of Reason, or Direction, and Choice of the Will: But we may observe another Class or Order of modified Pleasure and Pain, arising from and necessarily connected with some Judgment of Reason formed upon the different Appearances of Good and Evil to the Understanding, in the abstract, rational, intellectual Way and Order of thinking. And these different Modifications of Pleasure and Pain, which are consequent upon Judgment, are what we call the Passions, which determine us in the Choice and Pursuit of apparent Good, and in rejecting and avoiding every Thing, which appears, or is judged to be evil and injurious to us.

An Object which the Judgment pronounces to be good, and within our Power, excites the Passion or modified Pleasure of *Love*

or

or Delight, which determines the Will or Mind, as active, to the Pursuit and Enjoyment of it, as a Part of our Happiness: But if the Judgment, upon the Appearance, pronounces it evil, it excites the modified Pain of *Hatred*, and determines our Aversion to and Flight from it, as injurious. When any desirable Good is considered, as probably and easily attainable, it excites the Passion, or pleasurable Emotion of *Hope*; but if the Good desired, be considered as very difficult, or extremely hazardous in the Acquisition, such a Judgment of it impresses the painful Passion or Emotion of *Fear*: And here the preventing or getting rid of Evil is considered as a Good, and under the same Appearances of the Object, has the same Effect of producing and impressing Hope or Fear. The sudden, unexpected Access of Good, or Deliverance from Evil, strikes us with the Passion, or pleasurable Emotion of *Joy*; and the like Access of Evil, or Loss of Good, excites the painful Passion or Emotion of *Grief*. And if the Acquisition of any great, momentous Good in View, be look'd upon as impossible, or the Loss of any such Good once possessed, or in our Power, as now irretrievable, and not to be compensated by any other equivalent Good, it impresses the Mind with *Despair*, the most insufferable and tormenting Passion of all. The Enjoyment or Suffering of our Friends affect us with *Sympathy* or

Compassion, by which we enjoy or suffer with them, and make their Case our own, as our own Good or Happiness must depend upon theirs: But the Happiness and Prosperity of Enemies, which may be injurious to us, gives us the Pain of *Envy*, which can only be removed or alleviated by the Distress, Defeat, or Disappointment of our Rivals and Competitors.

Whoever carefully attends to these several Emotions of the Passions, will find, that they are all but the different Modifications of that natural, necessary Self-Love, or Desire of personal Happiness, either private or social, which the Author of Nature has impressed upon all conscious, intelligent Beings, as the great Spring and Motive of all their Actions, so far as they are capable of any Increase or Diminution of Happiness. The Passions are nothing else, but the different Modifications of Pleasure and Pain, as connected with the several Judgments we form of Good and Evil, according to the different Appearances of Objects, as related to our Happiness: And as our Happiness is partly private and personal, and partly social, derivative, and communicative, it was necessary, in the Wisdom and Order of Nature, that we should be moved, excited, and impelled to both these Species of Good, by such alternate Transitions from Pain to Pleasure, or *vice versa*, as might be sufficient to set us upon

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upon Action, and obtain the End of our Creation.

The other Appetites, Affections, and Passions of the Soul, terminate chiefly in private, personal Good or Happiness; but Sympathy or Compassion is the social Affection, which connects our own personal Happiness with that of others.

§. 4. But this Matter necessarily requires a farther Inquiry and Discussion. It has been doubted and disputed, whether the public, social Appetites and Affections have any necessary, natural Connexion with private Good or personal Happiness? Some learned Men, of great Sagacity and Penetration, have denied this, or taken the Negative of the Question; because they imagine, that granting such a Supposition would be destroying and setting aside all public, social Virtue, by resolving all into private *Self-Love*. Public, social Affection, say they, cannot be founded in private Self-Love or personal Happiness, since this would leave no Room for any proper social Affection, but must resolve all into private, personal Conveniency and Interest, or into a narrow, ungenerous *Selfishness*. This, I think, is, in short, the Objection in its full Force, which yet, when it comes to be considered, and put in a true Light, has nothing at all in it; it is founded only in a mistaken Notion of personal Happiness, and the necessary, natural Means of obtaining it: But when



the Matter comes to be rightly stated and considered, it will appear, that private and publick Affection, or Self-Love, and Social-Love, are so far from being inconsistent and repugnant, that they are naturally and necessarily connected.

It is evident, that all Pleasure and Pain, whatever the Object be, must be *personal*, or subjected in Individuals. The Pain we feel from the Sufferings of others, is as much a *personal* Pain, as that of Hunger, Thirst, or any private Appetite; and the Pleasure of removing this Pain, which we feel by Sympathy, is as true and real a *personal Pleasure*, and as necessary and essential to *personal Happiness*, as the Possession and Enjoyment of any private *personal Good*. Private and public Desire and Affection, therefore, cannot be distinguished, as if the Gratifications of one Kind were *personal*, or made a Part of *personal Happiness*, and the other not; for I as truly and really feel, and enjoy social, derivative and communicative Pleasure and Happiness, as I can do any private Gratification, which terminates in my individual *personal* Self, and can extend no farther, or affect any other Person.

But here it must be considered, that the strongest, closest, and most irresistible Tie, Relation, or Connexion in human Nature, is that of the vital Union of Soul and Body, upon which all animal Life, Sensation, and

Motion

Motion depend. This constitutes what we call the Man, human Person, or individual Self; and the Preservation and Well-being of this compound, identical, or individual Self, is the first Spring, and necessary Motive of all our Actions. No publick Affections, no foreign extrinsic Interest, or other Obligation whatever, can determine, or move a Man to the absolute intire Destruction, Perdition, or compleat Pain and Misery of his own complex Self. They have been, therefore, greatly mistaken, as Moralists, who have founded all Virtue, or moral Obligation, in the bare abstract Nature of Things, or in the *greater speculative Good*, exclusive of individual *personal Self*. This cannot be a moral Obligation, because any such Obedience would be impossible, and inconsistent with our very Make, and the necessary Constitution of human Nature. The eternal Salvation of a Multitude of Individuals, of a Family, a City, a Country, or of the whole World, would, undoubtedly, be a greater *Good* in Speculation or Theory, than the Damnation, or eternal Misery of any single Person or Individual, could be an *Evil*; and yet no rational Individual could will, or chuse his own eternal, irreparable Loss, Pain, or Misery, to prevent the Damnation of a Multitude, or of the whole World; and no wise or good Being could ever put a Man to such a Trial or Test of Obedience. I have given

this Instance, and put the Case thus strong, to make the Principle clear and indisputable, that all Motive to Actions, and consequently, all moral Obligation, must terminate ultimately on *personal Happiness*; and that no Good can be chosen, nor any Obligation arise, which should be absolutely inconsistent with this, and destructive to *Self*. When, therefore, Men talk of chusing the greater Good in the abstract Nature and Reason of Things, Allowance must be made for the greater Weight and Preponderancy of *personal Good*, to that Individual *himself*; for nothing can be a Good to him, or the Object of his Choice, that is absolutely inconsistent with, or destructive to his own Happiness and Well-being; and therefore, it is not *absolute*, but *relative* Good that must be the Object of the Will and Choice of Individuals: To extend any Obligation farther than this, would be carrying it beyond the Possibility and Extent of human Nature; and therefore, such Speculations and Theories of moral Truth and Rectitude, must suppose a hyperphysical, superangelical, and, indeed, impossible Virtue.

But the Author of Nature has formed us upon the Principle and general Law of relative Good, as the sole Object of our Will and Choice, and laid us under no Obligations that would be inconsistent with a preferable Self-Determination, and therefore, impracticable.

cable. But that all Will or Choice terminates objectively in relative Good, may, perhaps, appear from the following Considerations.

1. All our Knowledge is relative, and we know nothing of the absolute Nature, Reason, and Fitness of Things. They who suppose the contrary, and assume it as a first Principle in their Reasonings, that we are Judges of absolute Good, or of Good upon the Whole, are forced in a Manner to condemn the Deity throughout the whole Course and Conduct of Providence, in the Government of the World, and Direction of Affairs; for every Thing that is, must be absolutely, and upon the Whole good, or else there must be absolutely wrong Management, and ill Direction upon the Whole: But no Man who believes any Thing of a God, a Providence, or a right Management of Things, would say this; and therefore, it must be own'd, that all Evil is barely relative, with respect to us, and we can have no other Rule to judge of Good or Evil.

2. That we can judge of Good and Evil only relatively, or with regard to ourselves, is evident, from all the Comparisons and Distinctions we make about it, whenever we talk of it, or determine any Thing concerning it. When we say that such or such a Thing is good or evil, or that such a one acts right or wrong, we can mean nothing else but relative Good or Evil, as it respects  
us,



us, or the Society to which we belong, and whose Happiness is some Way or other connected with our own. We should not think the Happiness and Prosperity of implacable Enemies, whether of private Persons or Nations, to be good; we should not sympathize with them, or share their Enjoyments or Sufferings: On the contrary, we should rejoice at their Defeat, Adversity, or ill Success; and their Prosperity and Success would give us the greatest Pain, as the greatest Evil to us; tho', perhaps, we might have deserv'd such Punishment, and the Success of a mortal implacable Enemy against us might be just, righteous, and perfectly good in itself, and upon the Whole, and what we ought not only to acquiesce in, but be pleas'd and delighted with, if we judg'd of real absolute Good and Evil, as it is in itself, and in the abstract Nature, Reason, and Fitness of Things.

3. That all our publick, social, and most disinterested Affections and Sympathies are relative to personal Happiness, and terminate in it, is farther evident from the Order, Subordination, and different Strength of these Affections and Passions, as their Objects are nearer to, or more remote from Self, and are more or less connected with personal Happiness. The Preservation and Well-being of the Individual, is the strongest and most invincible Passion of all; the Impression cannot

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not be resisted, and every other Affection or Obligation arising from it must give Way to it: Nothing can supersede or set aside the natural, necessary Law of Self-Preservation and Defence.

The next strongest Impression, is the Desire and Love of Children, Issue, or Offspring. This Affection is natural and necessary, and is the strongest and most prevailing of all the social, sympathetic Passions. This is an Affection of the human Soul, scarce to be eradicated, an Impression not intirely to be eras'd, even by the most unworthy Behaviour or Demerit of such as are the Objects of it. The real Worth or Value of the Object, as meriting the Affection, is not here so much regarded, as the Nearness and necessary Connexion with personal Self. Children and Offspring are a second Self, and Nature has made the Relation and Connexion almost inseparable.

The next closest social Union is *Friendship*, founded on a Harmony and Agreement of Tempers, in which *Self* is always the Standard, Test, and Rule of Judgment. Friendship cannot consist with opposite ~~content~~ Affections, Sentiments, and Tempers; but where these are in Unison and Concord, it may be subsisted and maintain'd with evil, as well as good Affections. The sprightly and the dull, the grave and the ludicrous, the cool, sober and sedate,  
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and the hot, rash and precipitate, the generous and liberal, and the niggardly or stingy Affections or Tempers, cannot consist with any settled, established Friendship; and yet a Harmony and Agreement of Affections, Sentiments, and Tempers, may, as we often see, create and confirm a Friendship, tho' founded in the most vicious and irregular Appetites, Desires, and mutual Interests: And thus we find, that the Gangs of Thieves, and Clans of Robbers, are often very true and faithful to one another even to Death. It must be own'd, indeed, that Friendship founded in Wisdom and Virtue, is the only rational Affection of the Kind; and yet even this cannot be settled and maintain'd but between Individuals of the same Disposition and Temper: And from hence it is plain, that personal Self, and a social relative Conformity to the Connexion with it, is the true and natural Foundation of this most generous and beneficent Affection.

What is commonly call'd publick-spirited Patriotism, or the Love of one's Country, is a strong prevailing Affection in every generous, well governed Mind, and nothing can tend more to personal Satisfaction and Pleasure, or public social Reputation and Glory, than this; for by this Means a Man desires and deserves, or merits Fame at the same Time, and reaps his private personal Advantage from the publick Good. His Happiness

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is never the less private and personal for being derivative, publick and social; he best secures his own private Good, by all the Labour, Fatigue, and Hazard he exposes himself to for the Good of the Community: When he rejoices in his own Success, and enjoys the generous Pleasure of it, he is congratulated with the loud Applauses and grateful Returns of all those, who bless themselves in the Fruits and Fruition of his Goodness: This is the godlike Pleasure and personal Happiness of doing Good, and centering the Joys of a whole Community in one Breast.

But the most generous and extensive of all the social Affections, and in Comparison of which the rest are but private Appetites, is the divine Affection, or Temper of *universal Benevolence*: This unites the whole System of Rationals, as animated with one common Spirit, or Soul of Sympathy and Love, and disposes each Individual, so far as it falls within his Power, and Sphere of Action, to promote, guard, and secure the Happiness of all, or any one of the rest. This Benevolence is not so much a particular Passion or Emotion of the Soul, as a cool, settled, habitual Temper and Constitution of the Mind, by which the whole System of rational, intelligent Beings are united to each other, and to the Deity, whose universal and most diffusive Goodness animates, inspires,



spires, sustains, and directs the Whole upon the general Principles and Laws of rational Harmony, Unity, and Concord. This is what we properly call the *Law of Nature*, or the Principle and Spring from which every good and virtuous Action must flow, and by which the whole Conduct of a moral Agent is to be governed and directed.

The utmost Perfection of this felicitating Temper, or beneficent Disposition, join'd with a Power of doing good, or communicating Happiness adequate to it, is, perhaps, the liveliest Image or clearest Idea we can form of the Supreme Being, the Author, Animator, and Director of all Nature; and it is for Want of this just and natural Notion and Conception of him, that Men often make God rather the Object of their Dread and Horror, than of Love, Delight and Veneration. It is the Nature of Superstition to run all Religion into Dæmonism, by which Men draw an Idol or false God in their own Imagination, under the Image and natural Character of the Devil. Having possessed their Minds with Blackness of Darkness, and the Glooms and Horrors of an enthusiastic Malignity, they conceive of the Deity under the same Ideas, and take him to be as implacable and revengeful, as they themselves would be, had they his Power. But this is a Temper and Disposition, which stands in direct Opposition to that universal Beneficence and communicative Goodness,

ness, which is the Character of the Deity, and of every good Man, in Proportion to his Talents, Ability, and Capacity.

§. 5. From what has been hitherto observed and considered, it appears, that all Desire, and every Gratification of Desire, is and must be personal, though the Object of it should be ever so public or social; and as there is a Gradation or Subordination of Good, as greater or less, nearer or more remote, so the Objects accordingly make their Impressions stronger or weaker, and by that Means differently move and determine us to Action. And here the strongest and deepest Impression or Motive always takes Place in our Choice and practical Determination, before or against a weaker and less forcible one. Self-Preservation and Defence determines a Man to save himself in Preference to any other. The Life, Happiness, and Preservation of a Father, a Brother, a Child, an intimate, beloved Friend, &c. is nearer to us, and impresses us deeper, than that of a common Neighbour and Acquaintance, or of a mere Stranger. The Happiness and Prosperity of a Man's own Family, Town, or Country, differently affect and move him, in Comparison of other more distant and remote Societies and Communities, with whom his own Happiness is not so nearly connected and concerned. We can, without any great Emotion or Concern, hear of the Destruction of Multitudes, and of whole

whole Towns or Provinces in *India, China*, or any remote Parts of the Earth, on whom we had no Dependence, and from whom we receive no sensible, derivative Good, and Accession to our own Happiness; whereas the Loss of one near, faithful and capable Friend, on whom a Man had fixed his chief Hope and Dependence, would affect him deeper, and with a stronger Passion, than the Loss or Destruction of a whole Nation or World, that he had no Communication with or Expectations from: That this is so in Fact, is evident and undeniable; and the Wisdom and Necessity of it, in the Constitution of Nature, is obvious enough. The Design of Nature, in all our Appetites, Affections, and Passions, is to move and determine us to Action, in the Pursuit of such external, objective Good, as lies within our Observation, Cognizance, and Power: But had we been impressed by Objects too remote, and out of our Reach and Power, with strong Desires, that could not be gratified, this must have destroyed all the Ease and Comfort of Life, and taken us off from the Pursuit of nearer and more necessary Good. Our natural Appetites, Affections, and Passions, therefore, are wisely ordered, contrived, and suited to our Powers, Capacities, and Necessities, in the Circumstances we are under; and thus the nearest and most necessary Good fills the Capacity, and engages the whole Attention of the Mind,

Mind, overbears all weaker Impressions, and takes off our Attention from Objects, which are more remote, and less necessary to our Happiness; but as soon as the Mind is set at Liberty, and freed from the more pressing and urgent Desires of nearer and more necessary Good, our Thoughts presently enlarge, and expand themselves to remoter Objects, and we find ourselves united, by Appetite and Desire, to universal Good; and though the Cravings and Necessities of the bodily Appetites, and the Requirements and Provisions of an animal Life, in our Circumstances, fill up the Capacity of the Mind, and engage the greatest Part of the Attention, yet, were we once at Liberty, and freed from these, the whole Creation would be our Range, and no Good would escape our Disquisition and Pursuit.

§. 6. From this Account of the Appetites, Affections, and Passions of human Nature, we may conclude, that tho' they all terminate in the Good of each Individual, and were design'd and implanted in us to ascertain, promote, and secure *personal Happiness*, yet there is a just and necessary Distinction between the mere private and personal, and the publick, social, and communicative Impressions and Emotions of the Soul. The private Gratifications of Appetite and Desire, terminate solely in the Individual himself; there they begin, and there they end; but

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the social are derived from others as united in Society, to whom they are reciprocally communicated, and reflected back again; and this creates a social communicative Fruition, or growing, improvable Stock of Happiness, which rises and increases upon each Individual, in proportion to the Number of Sharers who all possess and enjoy the same common Good. Private Gratification consists in the Possession and Enjoyment of some private personal Property, which cannot, at the same Time, be the Possession and Property of any other; and such are the narrow Goods of Fortune and common Chance, or the external Means of gratifying the mere private selfish Appetites and Desires, which may be all comprehended in one Word, *Money*, as that commands them all. Not but this Commodity is of great and singular Use, as a proper Medium of Exchange, in procuring almost all the Conveniencies and Enjoyments of an animal Life: But where it is made a bare private Property, and not employ'd and expended for the Good of others, it is the Curse and Plague of the Possessor, who, amidst all his Bags and Stores, may want even Necessaries, and be exposed to the Contempt and Scorn of the poorest and most indigent of his fellow Creatures. The Miser is the most hated and contemptible Vermin upon Earth, whilst the poor deluded Wretch imagines, that all Honours, Respect,

Respect, and Deference paid to his Coffers, Bonds, and Consignments, are intended as his own Due, and paid to himself. The Rake, the Prodigal, and Spendthrift, is the more honourable and valuable Person of the two; for he hurts none but himself and his immediate Dependents, but the Miser cheats himself out of his own Happiness, by unjustly defrauding others of what he ought to communicate.

But the proper Gifts and Blessings of Heaven are all in common. God causes his Sun to shine, and his Rain to fall on the Good and Bad, the Just and Unjust. The Elements of Earth and Water, Fire and Air, communicate their vital Influences to all alike, without being lessened by the Number of Sharers. Truth, Virtue, and social Happiness increase, by Communication, the Number of Possessors, improve the Stock, and the farther they are diffused, the sweeter is the Enjoyment; and, indeed, the most private and selfish Gratifications are deriv'd from Society. Avarice feeds itself upon publick Generosity, and the proudest Luxury is maintain'd by the Labour, Sweat, and Toil of the Poor and Needy. The most haughty and luxurious Consumer and Waster of the rich Produce of Nature lives upon the industrious, laborious Poor, on whom he would scarce deign to look, or vouchsafe them a kind Word; and yet, without them, he might

run wild, and subsist himself with the savage Beasts of the Desarts and Forests; so necessarily and inseparably has the Author of Nature united Men in Society, and connected their mutual Interests and Dependencies, that without it, Life itself could not be desirable, or scarce sufferable. This is the true Source and Spring of even our most selfish and contracted Pleasures and Gratifications, whether the proud, ungrateful Possessors and Proprietors of such Good, will own it or not: Without this social, derivative Happiness, Man would be the most forelorn, wretched, and miserable Object in the Creation, and Death, or Extinction of Being, would be the Object of our Desires and Wishes.

§. 7. But there is yet another Passion deeply implanted in human Nature, which may be call'd the rational, intellectual, and moral Affection, Appetite, or Propensity. What I here mean is, the Love of *Truth*, *Order*, and *Rectitude*, both in Theory and Practice: But here it will be necessary to consider and explain the Nature and precise determinate Idea of Truth, physical and moral.

In the Contemplation of Nature, we observe a necessary Relation, Order, Proportion and Reason of Things, as contrived, designed and adjusted one to another, so as to make one complete universal Whole. This perfect

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perfect Order, Symmetry and Proportion, as the Result of perfect Reason and Wisdom, Skill and Contrivance, is what we call *Truth*, as signified and notified to us by our Ideas, the natural Marks and Signatures of Things existing without us. When Ideas are join'd or separated in affirmative and negative Propositions, agreeable to their real Relations, in the Nature and Reason of Things; such Propositions are physically true, otherwise false and contradictory, when they express Things different from what they are in Nature and Reason. Such abstract, physical or mathematical Truth and Falshood, can have no Medium, nor any Degrees. Every Proposition must be true or false, and every Thing that is true, must be equally true; but then such absolute physical Truths are not of equal Moment or Importance, with regard to human Happiness and moral Conduct. Truth, with regard to its Necessity and Importance, admits of infinite Degrees, as much as Good and Evil.

But though physical abstract Truth can admit of no Degrees, and there can be no Medium between Truth and Falshood of this Kind; yet Truth considered as moral, and as necessarily connected with Virtue or moral Good, admits of a very different Relation. Physical Truth consists in the Relation, Nature and Reason of Things; but moral Truth consists in the Rectitude, Harmony



and right Order of Tempers, Sentiments, Affections and Actions. The Relation of our Tempers, Sentiments and Actions, to the great End and Terminus of all intelligent Agency, *Happiness*, is their *moral Truth* or *Rectitude*; so far as our Actions are related to, and connected with the greater relative Good, or the greatest Good within our Power, they are morally *true*, *right* and *reasonable*. Moral Truth, therefore, and the Rectitude, Reasonableness and Fitness of Tempers, Affections, Sentiments and Actions, are but different Names, or different Ways of conceiving and expressing the same Thing, or the same Idea.

Though there can be no Medium, then, between abstract, physical, or logical Truth and Falshood, yet between what is morally true and false, or right and wrong in Sentiment and Action, there is a Medium of *Indifferency*; and an infinite Number of abstract, physical Truths may fall within this Medium, and be neither morally good or evil, right or wrong, with regard to this or that individual moral Agent. And thus it is of no Consequence in Morality, whether a Man thinks or believes right or wrong about the Distances, Figures, Magnitudes, Densities, and Motions of the Sun, Moon and Stars; or whether he has right or wrong Notions of a Thousand other physical, abstract

stract Truths, which he is no Ways obliged to understand or consider.

As therefore moral Truth, Right or Fitness of Action have infinite Degrees of Moment and Importance; and as there is a Medium of Indifferency between Good and Evil, or moral Right and Wrong, the greatest Good, or the most important Truth of this Kind, ought always to be chosen and acted upon, in Case of any Competition; and, I think, it is very obvious, that the physical or logical abstract Truth of Propositions, can be no certain general Rule or Measure of Action in this Case.

Mankind, as they stand related in Society, may be considered as, either in a State of Peace, Amity, and mutual Obligations of Beneficence, Succour and Protection, or in a State of War, unavoidable Opposition, and necessary Self-Defence: Without taking in this Distinction, there can be no right Judgment made of moral Obligations. To treat an Enemy in a State of War, as a Friend, or a Friend as an Enemy, would be equally absurd, false, and contradictory in moral Conduct. As Men are united and related in Society, the Necessity of Self-Preservation and Defence, is the strongest and most irresistible Passion of human Nature; and no Force, Impression, or Motive of Action can supersede or set aside this; and therefore, to set up any moral Obligation contrary to, or

inconsistent with it, would be to make Morality impracticable, and repugnant to Nature: So necessary is Self-Preservation and Defence. No other Law, or Rule of Conduct, can be set up against it, or stand in Competition with it. To carry any moral Obligation farther than this, may discover a speculative, superlative, and super-rational *Theorist*, but not a practical *Moralist*; and these refined Reasoners are not always the best Exemplifiers of their own Doctrine; they teach what they cannot possibly practise.

“ The Deity, say they, can have no other  
 “ Reason, nor Motive of Action, but ab-  
 “ stract Truth and Rectitude, without the  
 “ least Regard to Self, or personal Happiness.  
 “ But we ought to imitate the Deity, and  
 “ therefore, a primary Regard to Self, or  
 “ personal Happiness, cannot be true Virtue  
 “ or Goodness. *Rectitude*, abstracted from  
 “ personal Happiness, is the Rule and Law  
 “ of Action to the Supreme Being, and con-  
 “ sequently, ought to be so to us, so far as we  
 “ are truly good, and Imitators of the best  
 “ and wisest of Beings.” This may, per-  
 haps, look plausible, and might be good Reasoning, were we all Deities, and as independent as God himself: But Truth and Rectitude, abstracted from personal Happiness, or the View of increasing it, looks too much like a divine Prerogative, not imitable by imperfect,

perfect, indigent Creatures, whose Nature and Necessities require a still farther Pursuit and Augmentation of Happiness and Perfection: In such Beings, Truth, Reason, and Order, cannot be abstracted from the necessary, natural Desire of personal Good; and were this otherwise, there could be no real Motive to the Pursuit of Happiness.

The constant, uniform Determination of all Will and Choice by the eternal, immutable Law of Truth, Order, and Rectitude, is what constitutes the necessary Happiness and Perfection of the Deity: And this is the Law of all intelligent Beings, even of such as are created, derivative, and dependent; but the Law of Truth, Order, and Rectitude, must have a necessary Relation to the Nature and Constitution of the Being, who is to be governed and directed by it; and it is impossible to judge of what is right or wrong in Action, without taking into the Account the Nature, Situation, and relative Circumstances of the Agent. Many Things would be right, and agreeable to the Law of Truth, Order, and Rectitude, in a Prince or Sovereign, which would not be so in a common Subject, because the Subject does not stand, or act in the same Relation and Capacity as the Prince. This being observed, it will be easy to apply the general Law of Truth, Order, and Rectitude, to the several Ranks and Capacities of Being.

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The Deity, or the universal, intelligent, active Mind, and first Cause of all Things, being absolutely perfect, independent, and self-sufficient, can derive no Accession of Happiness or Perfection from any Thing extrinsic, and without him. The supreme, independent Being, cannot possibly, in any Case, be subject to the Necessity of Self-Preservation, or Defence, against any Thing without him, or extrinsic to himself, which yet is a necessary, indispensable Law and Rule of Action to all created, subordinate, or dependent Beings. This Distinction ought carefully to be regarded and attended to, since the Reason and Philosophy of moral Truth, or Rectitude of Action, intirely depends upon it, and cannot be understood, or explained without it.

From hence I had asserted, that all finite, imperfect, and fallible Judgment of Good and Evil, must be relative to Self-Happiness, and that none but an absolutely perfect and independent Being, can judge of absolute Good, or Good upon the Whole. This requires an infinite Understanding, and a perfect, unerring Knowledge of all Truth, Order, and Rectitude, as one intire, complete System, each Part of which has a necessary Dependence and Relation to the Whole. But though we cannot judge of this universal Truth and Order, Reason and Fitness of Things, by any abstract Reason; yet we are  
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not left without a Rule or Principle of Action, which while we keep to, and act upon, our Judgment of personal, relative Good, must terminate in universal, absolute Good: And by this Law or Rule of Action, every Individual ought to chuse and pursue the greatest personal or relative Good.

I presume, I may here take it as a Postulat-um, that the true and real Happiness of each Individual is not inconsistent with the Happiness and Good of the Whole; for if this be not supposed and granted, it must destroy all Unity and Connexion of the Parts and Whole, all Wisdom, Contrivance, and Design in the Creation, and introduce universal Blunder, Disorder, and Confusion.

We may imagine or conceive two Creatures to be formed and compounded upon such antipathetic, repugnant Principles and Laws of Action, that one should universally feel Pain in Proportion to the other's Pleasure; and the complete Happiness of the one should be the complete Misery and Torment of the other, and this mutually, and *vice versa*. Upon this Supposition, it is evident, that two such Beings must necessarily, inevitably, and by the Law of their own Natures, chuse, seek, and pursue each other's complete Misery and Destruction, as necessary to their own Happiness and Well-being: And the Case would be the same, if a like Antipathy and Repugnancy should be supposed between

a single Individual, and a whole Society, or the whole World. The Society, or Whole, must unavoidably seek and pursue the Destruction of that Individual, and the Individual must have the same Antipathy and Abhorrence to such a whole Community. It would be in vain here to talk speculatively of the greater absolute Good, or Good upon the Whole, while there could be no relative Good, or Possibility of personal Happiness with the Good of the Whole, and where the complete Happiness of the one, must be the complete and perfect Misery of the other. But we are certain, both from Reason and Experience, that Nature is not a Self-Contradiction, and that there are no such Blunders or Repugnances to Truth, Order, Justice, and Rectitude in the Creation, and united System of Things.

This perfect Unity, Order, Wisdom, and Design, by which every Individual is necessarily related to, and made a dependent Part of the Whole, necessarily supposes and implies a universal, designing Mind, and all-powerful Agent, who has contrived, adjusted, and disposed the Whole into such Order, Uniformity, concordant Beauty and Harmony, and who continues to support, govern, and direct the Whole. The Contemplation, therefore, of this universal Truth, Reason, Order, mutual Dependency, and Unity of Design throughout all Nature, is the true Knowledge and  
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Contemplation of the Deity, thus manifesting his infinite, divine Perfections, his eternal Power and Godhead in his Works. Creation leads us up to one supreme, universal, independent Contriver, Designer, and Disposer of all Things. All Nature shines with Deity, and divine Truth and Perfection irresistibly makes its Way to every rational, attentive Mind; and consequently, a speculative Atheist, or one who is really so in Theory, is as great a Contradiction in Nature, as undesigning Wisdom, blind Intelligence, fortuitous Necessity, and the Art and Contrivance of Chance. The Contemplation of universal Truth, Wisdom, Order and Unity of Design, must necessarily lead the Mind to some Subject of these Attributes, some universal Orderer and Designer. An *Atheist* in Speculation and Theory, is only a self-inconsistent, enthusiastical *Deist*; he is charmed and delighted with Truth, Order, Wisdom and Unity of Design, which evidently appear to him, and even force themselves on his Observation and Consent, through the whole Creation, and yet he denies in Words, that these divine Attributes and Perfections have any real Subject, and consequently, maintains that they are the Attributes and Perfections of Nothing, or no Attributes and Perfections at all. But such an Enthusiast is no real Atheist, though he would, without Truth or Reason, assume to himself that unmerited



Honour: He is only a rational Deist in his natural Make and Constitution, whom the Monsters *Superstition*, *Bigotry*, and *School Divinity* had frighted out of his Wits; of two Evils, he chuses what he thinks the least, *i. e.* the Imputation of *Atheism*, rather than that of metaphysical, scholastic *Christianity*. But surely *Deism* was a rational, consistent Medium, and he need not have run out of one Extream into another: While he is charmed and delighted with universal Truth, Reason, Wisdom, and Unity of Design, though he may call the Subject of these Attributes and Perfections by the Name of *Nature*, this is the very same Thing, and precisely the same Idea, which others express by the Names *God*, *Supreme Being*, *First Cause*, *Universal Orderer*, *Designer*, *All-powerful Efficient*, &c. An Admirer, therefore, and Lover of universal Truth, Reason, Order and Rectitude, though he may be a nominal and reputed Atheist, cannot be a real one; for the great engaging Object of his Contemplation and Delight, is really the Deity, the designing, intelligent Cause, Author, and Director of Nature.

§. 8. It is certain that Words are arbitrary, as depending, in their Signification, upon Consent, Custom, and Use of Speaking, in this, or the other Language; and yet Men are generally governed, and their Passions directed by them, as if they were natural, necessary

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cessary Signs of Ideas, or Notifiers of Things. When a Man, by the Force of Education, or rivetted Power of Sounds, has fixed in his Mind wrong Notions of God and Religion, every Thing contrary to his false Opinion and Misunderstanding, must be with him Infidelity, Irreligion, and Atheism; but this cannot alter or destroy the Nature of Things, or remove the fix'd, eternal Boundaries of Truth and Reason. If a Man should be ever so sincere and undesigning in his Misapprehensions and false Opinions, this Sincerity could never make them true or agreeable to Nature and Reason.

The impartial Love of Truth, Order and Rectitude, without Exceptions or Reserves, is certainly the Love of God; and a real Conformity of Temper, Affections, and Sentiments to the Supream Being, whether the Object of such Love, Delight, and Choice should be call'd *God*, or *Nature*; for no such different Names could at all alter the Truth, Reason, or Nature of the Thing. If perfect universal Truth, and moral Rectitude, be the highest Perfection in the Deity, the Love of these, must be the Love of God; and the regular, uniform Pursuit of them, is the only true and rational Pursuit of Happiness, or the supream satisfying Good.

§. 9. But as Contraries best illustrate each other, let us take a View of Religion, and the Love of God, in another Sense. Let us

suppose the Deity to be an absolute, arbitrary Being, without any other Measure, or Rule of Action, but mere Will and Pleasure. He has given us the Faculty of Reason and Understanding, by which we are to judge of Truth, and determine our Choice in temporal Matters, and the common Affairs of Life; but with regard to his own immediate Worship, and what we must do to obtain his Favour, or any Reward from him, we are not to consult Reason, or to judge by any natural Light, or Evidence of Things to our own Understandings, but we are to judge, and be determined by the supernatural Light of *Revelation*, as containing an express, positive, or authoritative Declaration or Manifestation of Will and Pleasure from God, above and beyond *Reason*. This is *metaphysical Theology*, or *School-Divinity*, commonly call'd *supernatural Revelation*, or *immediate Inspiration*, about which, the Patrons of it are infinitely divided, and could never come to any Agreement.

It is wonderful to observe, how much the Distinction between Reason and Revelation has divided and inflamed Mankind, and into how many opposite Parties and Factions it has split and torn the Professors of Theology, whether *Pagans*, *Jews*, *Magians*, *Christians*, or *Mahometans*: They all agree that Revelation is rational, though they affirm, that it contains Truths and Doctrines which cannot  
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be judged of by Reason, or be made the natural Objects of human Understanding, without a supernatural Light; the necessary Consequence of which is, that we must seek for the Rule of Truth somewhere else, and judge of *Religion* not by *Revelation*, but *Reason*. And from hence it must likewise necessarily follow, that the authoriz'd Judges and Interpreters of Revelation, have understood no more of their own Profession and Function, than a Mason does of Clock-Work: And this being evidently so, I hope they will give us Leave, in Time, to come to think, examine, and judge for ourselves; upon which Condition, we shall not be so liable to be mistaken ourselves, as they are to mislead us. I cannot think that God has given us Reason, to be given up again to them, or that we should put out our own natural Eyes, to see with their *supernatural Light*.

Truth is the natural Object of the Understanding, and the Mind of Man has a natural Power or Faculty of distinguishing Truth from Falshood, and Right from Wrong, as much as the Eye has to discern Light from Darkness, or one Colour or Shade of Light from another. Abstract Truth, Order and Rectitude charm and delight the Understanding and Mind of Man, as much as external, sensible Beauty and Harmony do the Eye and Ear. And the natural Congruity of the Object to the Faculty, and

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Pleasure thence arising, would be as strong and engaging in one Case, as in the other, were it not for the Power of Prejudice, false, deceiving Mediums, and unnatural Representations of the different Objects to their respective Faculties. Were it the Interest of certain authoriz'd Professors and Practitioners, to convey sensible Objects to their respective Organs, through wrong Mediums, as it is Truth to the Understanding, we should no more agree about Colours and Sounds, than we do about Reason and Revelation: White would be Black, and Green would be Yellow; and the Sound of a Trumpet would be the Sound of a Drum, as soon as *Imposture* had heated and inflamed the Mind into *Enthusiasm*. But this Inversion of Nature has been chiefly owing to an artificial, invented Corruption of it. Moral Truth, Order and Rectitude would have been much better understood, had it not been so much taught by the learned Professors of the Science, who, like opposite Counsel at the Bar, are feed to nullify and make void the Law, by their different and contradictory Pleadings upon it; which commonly turns Light into Darkness, and obscures what was clear enough before; but I hope this Evil may not be yet grown desperate and remediless. Let us but study and follow Nature more, and pay less Deference and Regard to her interested

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interested Commentators, and we need not doubt of growing wiser.

§. 10. The Truth, Reason, and Fitness of Things, and the moral Rectitude, or right Order of Tempers, Dispositions and Actions, are not in themselves, or in their own Nature, mysterious, obscure, or difficult to be understood, and can scarce ever be mistaken, where Truth is really sought and aim'd at. Interest, Selfishness, and corrupt Affection are the great Blinds of human Understanding; when these are removed, the native Light of Reason shines into the Mind, like the Light of the Sun upon couching a Cataract, or taking off a Suffusion of the Eye.

Universal Truth, Order, Rectitude, and Unity of Design, such as unprejudiced Reason must always observe, in pure uncorrupted Nature, is the Rule and Measure of all moral Sentiment, Affection and Action. This Temper and Affection unites us to the Deity, and to the whole System of Rationals, in Proportion to our different Capacities, Relations, and Sphere of Action. This Temper, Disposition and Affection is the Perfection and true Happiness of rational Nature, and the nearest conceivable Image and Resemblance of the Union and Harmony of Angels, and of the *Spirits of just Men made perfect*. By this Temper, Affection, and prevailing Love of Truth, we are

taken off from all the false, deceiving Appearances of a selfish, contracted, sensitive Good, and united to the supreme, inexhaustible Fountain of all rational, intellectual, and durable Good.

§. II. This intellectual, spiritual, or divine Affection, the Love of Truth and Rectitude, is, in the Order and Constitution of Nature, the commanding, reigning Principle, or Power in the Soul of Man, by which all the inferior and more private Appetites, Desires and Gratifications, are to be moderated, restrained, influenced and directed. The Breach and Violation of this natural Subordination of Affections and Passions in the Mind, introduces the very same Anarchy and Confusion in Self-Government, as if all Difference of Order, Rank, and Authority were to be set aside, and confounded in a Family, Town, State, or Civil Government. When the inferior Appetites and Passions rise against Reason, dethrone the rightful Sovereign, and bear down the Love of Truth, Order and Rectitude; it is like a wild, ungovernable Mob rising against their King and Country, and setting aside all Order, Obligation, or Right of Law.

This Confusion, Disorder and Anarchy of the Soul, is what Divines call the *State of Nature*; and it is, undoubtedly, the greatest Corruption and Depravation of all Nature and Reason: But to call it *natural*, looks

too much like defaming human Nature, and libelling the Creator: And for Men to pretend that they are under a *natural Necessity* of being governed by their private, selfish Appetites and Passions, against all the Power of Reason, and contrary to all their Knowledge and Love of Truth, is so very absurd and ridiculous a Plea, that it deserves nothing but Laughter and Contempt; unless where the Magistrate is obliged to apply the proper Remedies of ungovernable Appetites, and mischievous Passions; and when this is the Case, the Plea of *Necessity* can move no Compassion: The Offender against Nature and Reason is never pitied or excused by any Arguments he can urge from *moral Impotence*, or natural *Weakness* and *Corruption*; and had he been really under any such Necessity, and God had not vouchsafed him sufficient Grace, Light, or Strength to resist it, every one must see where the Blame would rest.

§. 12. It must, however, be own'd, that abstract Reason alone, or Truth in Speculation and Theory, would not be here sufficient to counterbalance, and bear down the Weight and Impetus of the contrary Appetites and Passions. Truth itself, as appearing in bare abstract Reason and Speculation, has little or no Force or Influence in our Choice and particular Determinations, till our Desires and Uneasiness are raised, in Proportion to the Importance of the *Truth*, or Greatness of the



*Good in View.* A Man is not moved or determined by the bare Speculation of any Good, how great soever in Theory, while he feels himself easy enough without it, and does not desire it as any Part of his *own Happiness*. The Possession and Enjoyment of it might be a great Good to others, but he does not think it would be any Pleasure or Enjoyment at all to him, while he is perfectly easy and contented as he is. The Acquisition of any Good must cost a Man some Pains, and no Man will be at any Pains in the Pursuit of what he sees or feels not the Want of. As the Pain of *Desire* always precedes the Pleasure of gratifying it, this painful Sensation constantly determines Men in their Pursuit of Good: It is not abstract Reasoning, or Theory of any Kind, but Experience and Feeling, that must convince a Man of his present Unhappiness, and the Necessity of chusing and pursuing some greater Good.

§. 13. The most common Observation, and daily Experience must convince any one, that Men are not determined in their Choice and Pursuits, by the greater, apparent, or comparative Good, in an abstract Judgment of Reason. There is no Man but must see, and own, that Credit, Reputation, the handsome Conveniencies of Life, and publick Usefulness, are, in a Judgment of Reason, vastly preferable to Poverty, Rags, Beggary  
and

and Contempt; and yet while a Man delights more in Idleness and Ease, than in Diligence, Care, and honest Industry; and while amidst all his Penury, Nastiness and Contempt, he is content where he is, and feels not the Want of what others enjoy, he remains voluntarily, and out of Choice, in his present Condition, and is not practically moved, or determined to put himself out of it. Let a Man be ever so thoroughly convinced and persuaded, in a Judgment of Reason, of the vast Advantages of Virtue; let him see, and own, that it is as necessary to a Man, who has any great Aims in this World, or Hopes in the next, as Food is to Life; yet while he can taste or enjoy no Pleasure in it, while the Gratifications of Lust and Appetite are the greatest Good he feels, or has any Relish for, he is not moved or determined to any greater Good in View: But let the Man be once brought (no Matter by what Means) *to hunger and thirst after Righteousness*; let his Appetite and Desire be raised in Proportion to the greater, rational, and speculative Good, or his *Taste and Feeling* be made adequate to his *Sight*; and it shall presently set him to Work, and employ all his Powers. But what does he thus labour and struggle for? Not surely for the greater apparent Good, in a Judgment of Reason, but for the present Gratification, in getting rid of a plaguing, vexatious Appetite, or painful Sensation,

against all Truth, Reason, or future Consequences.

Take a Man who is under the prevailing Power of any Appetite, Lust, or Passion of the inferior, private, animal Kind, and who knows no greater Pain or Pleasure, than the Desires and Gratifications of that Sort, and this shall determine him in his actual Choice and Pursuit, let him be ever so much convinced of the destructive Nature and Tendency of it, and the Reasonableness and Fitness of the contrary; He finds his Health declining, his Estate wasting, his Friends deserting him, and Poverty, Contempt and Shame assaulting him, like an armed Man: He sees and feels his Ruin impending, he owns his Madness and Distraction, and in his sober Intervals, vows, and resolves upon a Reformation: But the Sight of a Pot-Companion, the Sound of a Bell or Horn, the Name of a Mistress, or any such occasional Incentive to the ruling Appetite, at once disarms and ~~despises~~ his Reason, and pushes him on to the brutal Gratification, against all his Convictions, Vows, and Resolutions to the contrary: Appetite has now the prevailing, governing Power, its Dictates and Impulse must be obey'd, and Reason or Conscience cannot be heard or regarded.

That this is so in Fact, I believe, no Man acquainted with human Nature, and the real State of Mankind, could deny; But it will  
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*deposes*

be said, that this ought not to be so; that such a Constitution is perfectly wrong; and that such Criminals deserve the severest Punishment. I shall not deny, or dispute this at present, I am only considering human Nature as it is, and as we find it in Fact; but the Cause, and Cure of such an Evil, may deserve a further Discussion. But this, however, I think is plain, that the greater apparent Good in mere Speculation, or abstract Reason, never determines a Man's Will or Choice, against the greater Weight, or more pressing present Uneasiness of Appetite and Desire to the contrary; and that no rational Good, how great soever in Speculation or Theory, can determine a Man's Will or Choice, while he does not desire it, or feel the Want of it; and while, consequently, the Possession or Acquisition would be no Enjoyment or Gratification.

§. 14. From all this we may certainly conclude, that the overbearing Weight, and Stimulus of the inferior animal Appetites and Desires, terminated on some private, separate, and contracted Good, is that Power, or Principle in Nature, which darkens the Understanding, enslaves the Will, and obstructs all the Efforts and Operations of Reason: Take away this Obstacle or Counter-Balance, and Reason perfectly exerts itself, and shines out with its native Force and Energy. Reason, in this Case, is not extinguished, corrupted,



corrupted, or destroy'd, but only suppress'd, borne down and contracted. When a Man is oppress'd and kept down by an unsupportable or unfurmountable Weight, this does not destroy his natural Force or Strength, which remains the same, and exerts itself against the Resistance, so far as it will go; for remove the Obstacle or Resistance, and the same natural Strength, or Power of Motion, still remains, and exerts itself as before. Thus when a Man is shut up in a Prison, and fastened with Irons, his natural Strength, or Power of Action, is not hereby diminished, weakened, or destroyed, but only resisted and reacted; but take away the Obstacle or Resistance, and the Man being thus set at Liberty, has the same natural Strength, and exerts it as freely as before.

It is a great Mistake, therefore, in some Divines, and Declaimers on human Nature; to imagine that Reason itself is corrupted, depraved, or lost, when it is only borne down, contracted, and its free Operations resisted by the contrary Weight and Power of the Appetites and Passions. These Men act irrationally and destructively in moral Conduct, not from the Want or Depravation of Reason, but from the overbearing Strength of Appetite, which, while it prevails, will not suffer them to consult their Reason, or follow its Dictates. But let this preternatural Force of Appetite be taken off, and Reason presently resumes

sumes and exerts its native Strength and Vigour, and shines in its own Light.

§. 15. But here a Question will naturally arise, What Help or Remedy have we in this Case? Is Reason here in the Condition of a Man who is borne down by an insupportable Weight, or a Man shut up in a Prison, and clogg'd with Irons, that he cannot move or stir against an unfurmountable Resistance? I answer, No; this is very seldom, if ever the Case; and for this, I need only appeal to every Man's own Experience. The inferior animal Appetites, how strong and urgent soever, are not irresistible; they operate not by any Force or Compulsion, but must first gain a Man's Consent, and make the Gratification a voluntary Act of his own. A Man's pretending to Force or Necessity here, would be pleading a *compell'd Will* or *Choice*, which is a Contradiction in Terms: Nor can any one say, that Reason in such Cases would not have directed and determined him better, had he hearkened to it, and been governed by it, or had he not peremptorily resolved to gratify the Appetite against Reason. And in all such irrational Delights and brutal Gratifications, the Convictions, Stings and Reproaches of Reason and Conscience afterwards, shame Men out of any such Pretence or Plea of Necessity, and force them, whether they will or no, to stand *self-condemn'd*. But the Truth is, that  
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in all such Cases, Men arm and fortify themselves against Reason, and resolve not to hearken to, or be determined by it: They wilfully and resolutely set aside, and thrust out the *Man*, in order to be govern'd by the *Brute*; and when they have thus unman'd and brutify'd themselves, they would fain lay the Blame somewhere else, though they are forced at the same Time to confess, that they acted against Knowledge, Reason and Conscience.

This is the Case with regard to the mere carnal and brutal Gratifications of Appetite, Lust and Passion. Men are not enslaved and subjected to these from any Error of Judgment, or for Want of knowing better; they see, and own the Reasonableness and Fitness of the contrary, but have not Courage and Resolution enough to set about it. Ease and Indolence, Sloth and Negligence possess them, and therefore, they chuse to sit down as contented willing Slaves to the tyrannical Lust which governs them, rather than to make those painful Efforts and Struggles, which would be necessary to assert their Right, and regain their Liberty: From hence they labour and groan under the most wretched Bondage, and suffer more by the Weight of their Chains, than would be necessary in breaking and throwing them off. Those usurping Tyrants of the Soul, the brutish Lusts and Appetites, by being resolutely deny'd

ny'd and restrain'd, would soon grow weaker and less importunate. Every Victory gain'd by Reason over Lust and Appetite, is rewarded with Peace and Pleasure of Well-doing, which is a pure rational Delight, of another Kind, and infinitely superior to what the captivated Slave had ever tasted in his Chains. And when once the Desire and Love of Truth and Rectitude come to prevail, and gain the Ascendant over the inferior carnal Appetites and Desires, this rational Pleasure and Delight, this spiritual divine Propensity and Gratification, will as certainly and regularly determine a Man's Choice and Pursuit that Way, as ever his carnal Appetites and Desires did the other: And now the Man is delivered out of the Darkness and Vassalage of Lust and Appetite, and brought into the glorious Light and Liberty of the Sons of God, and Heirs of Immortality. He is now no longer in the Condition of that unhappy Complainer, *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*; but he both sees and pursues the true, eternal, immutable Good, the sincere, undisguised Happiness and Perfection of human Nature.

This Desire and Love of Truth, Order and Rectitude in Temper, Disposition and Action, is the true, rational, or philosophical *Love of God*, by which we are taken off from the Darkness and dead Weight of Sense and Carnality, and united to, or consimulated with



with the Deity. By this divine Affection, we withdraw ourselves from the Noise, Darkness and Confusion of a busy distracted World, to converse with the supreme, eternal Fountain and Origin of all Truth and Goodness; to receive Intelligence from our Maker and Former, to take in the Rays of his immortal Light and Glory, and to hearken to his Voice, speaking to our inward, silent, attentive Reason. This is that consimilating Love of God, or Transformation into the Image and Likeness of the Deity, which Reason and true Philosophy teach us, without any of the wild romantic Dreams and Conceits of dark Enthusiasts and Visionaries.

This rational Light and Sense of divine Presence and Power, Truth and Order, which shine and display themselves through the whole Creation, and flash Conviction from every Part of it, is the true and real Characteristic of a *Deist*, as distinguish'd from an *Enthusiast*. This Sight and Sense of Deity, depends not on any supernatural Revelation, Miracles, or Prophecy, and needs none of the supernatural Seals, blind Conveyances, or mechanical Operations of the Spirit. But to converse with God, and receive Communications of Light and Truth from the Deity, a Man need not go out of himself; and he never misses his Way, but when he does so, by quitting his Reason, to wander in the Dark,

Dark, in Search of some external, authoritative Rule of Faith: In this Way, every enthusiastic, misguided Class have their own Rule and Test of Faith and reveal'd Religion, which they pretend to be all clearly written in a certain omniscient, infallible Book, about the Sense of which, they are yet infinitely and eternally divided.

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CHAP. V. SECT. I.

*Of moral Self-Regimen, or the Government of the Passions and Conduct of the Understanding. In which, Free-Agency, or human Liberty, is farther considered and discussed.*

FROM what has been observ'd and proved in the last Chapter it appears, that the various Modifications of Desire, impressing several Kinds and Degrees of Pain or Uneasiness upon the Mind, are the great Springs and Motives of Action; and that all the Pleasure or Happiness we are capable of,  
arises

arises from the Gratification of such Desire, or removing the Pain by the Acquisition and Enjoyment of the Object.

Where there is no superior Principle of Understanding, or abstract Intellectual Perception, Desire and Love of Truth, to moderate, govern, and restrain the inferior animal Appetites and Desires, the Stimulus, or Pain of the Appetite itself, and the consequent Pleasure of Gratification, is the sole Motive or Reason of the Action. The Creature, in this Case, is not governed or directed by any Reason, Wisdom, or discriminating Choice of its own, but by the eternal, universal Reason or Wisdom of God himself; who, as the Author and Director of Nature, constantly impresses, and impels the whole animal Creation to such Actions, as are most necessary and conducive to their own Preservation and Well-being.

This is the great Law of animal Nature, and where it takes Place, as in the brute or irrational Animals, the Creature acts right, obeys the Dictates of divine Truth and Reason, and answers the End of its Creation: Here is no Reason to be abused, no Perversion of Understanding, no false Judgment or unnatural Bias, to misguide the Action: This yielding to the necessary Impression of an Appetite or Instinct, and gratifying it by applying to the Object, which infinite unerring Wisdom has suited and adapted to the Faculty,

culty, is acting in Conformity to the necessary general Law of animal Nature, and has, accordingly, its natural Reward in the Gratification itself; but here is nothing of *Liberty, rational Choice, or moral Agency*. A Beast under the Power and Impression of any Appetite or Instinct, can have no other Motive or Rule of Action in a Judgment of Sense: He cannot, from any superior Principle of Understanding, or Judgment of Reason, suspend, moderate, or restrain the Appetite or Impulse to the Gratification, by considering the Nature and Consequences of it; and that such a Gratification, under such Circumstances and Conditions of Action, would bring on a greater Pain, to be follow'd with utter Destruction and Extinction of Being.

Here then, the Appetite or Instinct itself being the only Rule and Measure of Action in a Judgment of Sense, the gratifying it will be natural and necessary, and the Creature cannot be charged with any wrong Judgment, or Perversion and Abuse of its Faculties. But with Man the Case is quite otherwise. Man is endued with a superior Power or Principle of Understanding, or intellectual Faculty of perceiving and contemplating Truth in the general abstract Relations of Ideas and their Objects: These Relations and Connexions of Ideas he can form into Propositions, which express such Truths



or abstract Relations, agreeably to the Nature and Reason of Things: From hence he can connect past and present with future, and consider the Nature and Consequences of his Actions, as they are related to, and connected with his Happiness throughout the whole Period of his Existence. This is that Power or Principle of Action, by which the Author of Nature has dignify'd us, and distinguish'd Man from all the inferior and mere animal Parts of the Creation. This intellectual Faculty or Power of perceiving the Truth, Reason and Fitness of Things, is implanted in us, and intended by the Author of Nature, as the governing, commanding Principle of the Soul, by which all the inferior animal Appetites, Impulses and Desires are to be moderated, modify'd and directed. The right Use and Application of this Faculty, constitutes that rational OEconomy or Government of the Mind, in which the Happiness, Perfection and Rectitude of every intelligent Being must consist.

§. 2. But here the searching busy Mind of Man, willing to shift off the Imputation of Guilt, or any Obligation or Liableness to Punishments, looks out for a thousand Evasions and Expedients to sink itself into a State of Brutality, and even into a lower and more despicable Class of Being than the Brutes. Men press'd with Guilt and Shame, and willing to justify or excuse themselves, plead the

the Weakness and Insufficiency of Reason to govern and restrain the too violent and unruly Appetites and Passions, and consequently, that God has given them Reason and Understanding to no good End or Purpose at all, but only to plague and distress them, and render them the most miserable Part of the Creation: For such must be the unhappy Condition of Man, if the Arguments of Fatalists and Antimoralists should hold good.

“ The Will, say they, must necessarily follow the last Dictates or Judgment of the Understanding concerning Good and Evil, Happiness and Misery. No Man can chuse Evil as such, or as so considered, and the very Supposition is a Contradiction. The voluntary Choice of Evil is as absurd and contradictory as a compell’d Choice, or a voluntary, free Necessity. But the Impressions of Objects, or Perceptions of the Understanding, are necessarily such as they are, and cannot be alter’d by any Choice or Power of the Mind. The Understanding necessarily represents Things, and the Will or active Power necessarily follows the Representation of the Understanding. Now this being so, it is very evident, that every *Perception* or *Act* of the Mind, from first to last, must be necessary; and there can be no such Thing in Nature as *Liberty* or *Free-Agency*. No Man, considering and taking in all Circumstances

“ circumstances and Conditions of Action,  
 “ could ever restrain the Gratification of any  
 “ Lust or inordinate Desire, or suspend his  
 “ Judgment against any one false Proposition  
 “ which he has yielded his Assent to. The  
 “ greatest Villain, or most profligate Offend-  
 “ er, could never have acted otherwise than  
 “ he did; and therefore, to punish him  
 “ upon that Supposition is unjust: You may  
 “ punish him as a Brute or wild Beast, and,  
 “ perhaps, tame him, and bring him to your  
 “ Hand, if you can give him Pain enough:  
 “ But if you punish him as a free Agent,  
 “ or as having any rational Command of  
 “ himself, in Consequence of his Reason or  
 “ Understanding, this is plainly immechanical  
 “ and unphilosophical, and evidently ar-  
 “ gues your own Want of Reason and Un-  
 “ derstanding. You blame, and punish o-  
 “ thers, for doing that which you must have  
 “ done yourself, and could not have avoided  
 “ doing in the same Case, and under the  
 “ same Circumstances; which is not doing  
 “ as you would be done by.”

I think I have here given the Substance  
 and full Strength of the Argument against  
 Liberty and rational Free-Agency. Whether  
 there be any Truth or common Sense in  
 this, I must leave others to judge; but I am  
 sure it is the true Philosophy and Rationale of  
 Fatalism, or of what one may call the Me-  
 chanism of Reason. A Man in thinking and  
 reason-

reasoning by a Faculty of perceiving and judging of Truth, is no more a free Agent, than a Clock or Dial, which goes wrong, without any Power or Principle within itself of regulating and adjusting its own Motions. And if we suppose such a Machine to be conscious of its own Motions, and to be pleased and gratify'd with Disorder and Irregularity, it would then act voluntarily, or spontaneously, with an Appetite, Gust, or natural Bent and Inclination, and be just in the State and Condition of a *human Mind*.

This Hypothesis or Scheme of Morals, is so repugnant to all Reason, Experience and common Sense, that it could have needed no Confutation, had not false Principles of Philosophy, and the metaphysical Shifts and Evasions of speculative Men made it necessary. But as this Subject has been exceedingly perplex'd and obscured by the many Disputes and different Opinions of learned Men about it, it may be of Consequence to search the Matter to the Bottom, in order to find, if possible, where the Truth lies, and how far, or in what Sense Men are, or are not, free Agents.

§. 3. Nothing, perhaps, has contributed more to darken and perplex the Philosophy of human Nature, than an unintelligible, scholastic Way of talking about the Mind, Soul, or thinking, intelligent Principle or Power within us. The Mind has been di-



vided into a great Number of distinct Powers, Faculties and Capacities, active or passive, and spoken of as so many different and distinct Agents, or passive Sufferers: Thus the *Understanding* perceives and judges; the *Will* orders, commands, resolves and acts; the *Conscience* approves or disapproves, acquits or condemns; the *Affections* enjoy or suffer, and communicate Pleasure or Pain; whereas in Truth and Reality, the Understanding is the Perception itself, the Will the actual Intention, Resolution or Action, and the Affections or Passions, the differently modify'd Pains or Pleasures of the same Mind or intelligent active and passive Being. These different Faculties and Capacities, active or passive, have served to account for every Thing with such Philosophers. The Stomach digests and prepares the Food for Nourishment by the digestive Faculty; the same prepared and digested Aliment is convey'd to, and retain'd by the several appropriated Parts, by the retentive, attractive and nutritive Faculties; and any redundant, superfluous Matter is ejected and thrown out by the expulsive Faculty. And thus the Mind understands and perceives Truth by the Understanding or intellectual Faculty, wills by the Will or elective, active Faculty, and receives the various Impressions from without, by the Senses or sensitive Faculties. And in the same Way of talking, a Man acts as a private Person

by

by the private Capacity, and as the Master of a Family, or publick Magistrate, by the family or national Capacities or Faculties: But every one must see that all this would be trifling, and consist in nothing but identical Propositions, and affirming the same Thing or the same Idea of itself; and that all these supposed different Faculties, Powers or Properties, are nothing else but different Names for the same Mind or intelligent thinking Being, considered as acting, or being acted upon after different Manners. And thus the Understanding is the Mind considered as perceiving and judging of Truth; the Will is the same Mind considered as resolving, acting and determining itself to this or that; Conscience is the Mind judging of its own Actions, as good or evil; and Sense is the same Mind, Soul, or thinking Being, as receiving various Impressions from external Objects.

How, or after what Manner, our various and multifarious Thoughts, Perceptions, Desires and Volitions are united and held together in one intire Piece, one Mind or human Person, we know not, nor is it possible we should know; because a Man or human Person, is a Unity or intire Piece, of such a Composition and Make, as transcends all human Knowledge and Comprehension. The whole Design, and all the Ends and Uses of a Clock, a Ship, or any Piece of Mechanism and Architecture, may be very well known,

and thoroughly understood; because any such Composition of Parts which make a Unity, a Whole, or an intire Piece under any Denomination, being of human Contrivance and Formation, must be so far the adequate Object of human Understanding; But it is not so with the Works of God, or the Effects of divine Wisdom and Power. Man can only understand the Nature, Formation, Ends, and Uses of the Works of Man; but none but God himself can understand or comprehend the infinite, divine Geometry and Architecture. We may know enough of the Works of God to discover infinite Wisdom and Contrivance, join'd with the most absolute, irresistible Power and Energy throughout the Whole: But we can know nothing of the real Essences or internal Nature and Constitution of Things, which are formed, continued, and subsisted by the infinite, universal Presence, Power and Agency of the Deity.

Here then, perhaps, we may be let into the Secret, and be enabled to discover that grand Arcanum or Desideratum, which has hitherto perplex'd and confounded all Philosophy, namely, what that unknown Substance or Substratum is, which connects, unites, and supports what we call the different Modifications, Properties, Attributes and Adjuncts of Individuals. The metaphysical, unintelligible Jargon of the Schools about Substance

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stance and Properties, or Attributes, had almost destroy'd all Truth and common Sense in such abstract Reasonings, till Mr. *Locke* set this Matter upon a better Footing. The Scholastics had considered and talk'd of *Substance* as that which could subsist and act of itself, and by which the several Powers, Properties and Attributes were united, individuated and denominated. Extension, Solidity, Mobility, Figure, Weight, Colour, &c. were Properties or inherent Qualities of some unknown Subject or Substance call'd MATTER. Sensation, Intelligence, Volition, &c. were the Properties, Acts or Affections of an unknown, spiritual or immaterial *Substance*; to this unknown Substance, of which we could have no Idea or Conception at all, was attributed the whole Power of uniting, individuating, actuating and supporting what they call'd Properties, Attributes or inherent Qualities: And here we see these Philosophers stumbled in the Dark, upon the unknown God whom they had never sought, and whose universal Presence, Power and Agency they could not discover in his Works: They knew well enough what united, individuated and denominated the several constituent Parts of a Clock, a Ship, or any compound Piece of human Contrivance and Workmanship; but they were extremely puzzled and perplex'd to account for the Unity and Individuation of the Works of God. They knew  
or



or own'd nothing of the divine Geometry, Mechanism and Contrivance, nothing of the continued Presence, Power and Agency of the Deity through all Nature; and therefore were forced to rack their Invention to find out imaginary Causes and Principles of Unity of their own Creation: They had introduced a Deity only to make a World upon the Principles of independent Self-Preservation, Agency and Support; and then they had nothing more to do with the Creator, but to philosophize the Creator out of the World which he had made; and thus by Wisdom they knew not God, and the great Use of such a false Philosophy was to set aside Religion.

But true Philosophy will always be on the Side of Deism, and explode Atheism, whether natural or moral. I have largely prov'd before, that Gravity, Attraction, Pressure, Cohesion, and all the mechanical Powers, as they are call'd, not being essential, inherent Properties of Matter, can be nothing else but the continued Power and Agency of the Deity or universal Cause, impress'd upon the whole material System, under such and such general Laws of Motion and Unity of Design. What is it that individuates or identifies a Body, and makes it one, but that Unity of Design, that Power or Principle by which its several Parts cohere, and are moved and directed at once so, as to answer the same  
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End or Purpose? What is it which individuates a Mind or Soul, but the same Unity of Design, or such Combination and Connexion of Thought, Ideas, or successive Modes of Self-consciousness, sustain'd by the divine Presence and Power, and directed to the same End or Purpose, with regard to the Individual itself, and other Individuations of the same Kind to which it is related? Take away this Unity of Design or mutual Relation and Dependence of the Parts and Whole, and all Individuation ceases, together with all Thought, Intention and Contrivance. Thus while the same Principle of Life, Sensation and conscious Motion or Agency is continued and connected with the same organiz'd System, and directed to the same general End or Purpose, it is the same Man or human Person; but take away this Unity of Intention and Design, and the Man or human Person is destroy'd, and can no longer be considered as the same. And from hence it is evident, that the universal Presence, Power and intelligent Agency of the Deity, is the only Principle of Individuation, by which all Unity and Diversity, all Relation, Dependence and Connexion of Parts and Whole is sustain'd and continued; and without which, there could be nothing but infinite Confusion and Indistinction throughout all Nature.

Whether this universal Presence, Power and designing Agency of the Deity, be not that

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learned Professors of Logic and Metaphysics.

In this Way, the Ideas and Perceptions within us, or the several Modifications of the self-conscious Mind, have been considered and spoken of as a Sort of Pictures or Images of Things without us, as they exist in their own absolute Nature *extra mentem*. But if we mean any Thing by Words, it must be the Ideas themselves, simple or complex, as they exist in the Mind, and to which the Name is immediately annex'd, as its proper Sign or Signifier: And as Words are thus the Marks, Signs, or Notifiers of Ideas, so those Ideas are the Signs or Notifications of Objects or Things without us, not as they exist in their own absolute Nature, but relative to us. Thus the Idea or Sensation excited in the Mind, is very different, according to the different relative Position and Situation of the Object with respect to us, as nearer, or more remote, or as the Impression is convey'd through different Mediums, or through the same Medium differently affected; but still the Object in its own absolute Nature or real Essence, as existing *extra mentem*, remains the same, and is not altered or changed by any different Impression, arising from a different State of the Medium or Organ upon which the Idea or Sensation in the Mind depends. These different Impressions and Sensations, inform us of the  
different



different State and Circumstances of the Object with respect to us, and so far as we are concerned to know any Thing about it, but can never inform us what the Thing is in itself, nor its own absolute Nature. For in this Sense, as Things without us in their own absolute Nature or real Essences, are subsisted and upheld by the Act and Energy of the Deity, they can be known only to God himself, as they are the sole Work of God. All that we know of Bodies as existing without us is, that they consist of extended, resisting Parts, differently modify'd and moved, and thereby fitted to make such and such Impressions upon the sensitive Organs, and excite the respective Modes of Sensation with which they are connected: But what that universal Force, Power or Energy is, which we find impressed upon the whole material System, and communicated from one Body to another by certain established Laws and Conditions of Motion, is a Matter beyond our Knowledge, Comprehension or Search. Whether this universal Force or Energy, as modify'd and individuated by the impress'd Organ, be not the Sensation itself, may be a Matter of farther Speculation and Inquiry; but I dare not pronounce any Thing certain or positive in so abstruse a Point.

It is, however, certain, that all our Knowledge must be confined to our Ideas and Perceptions, and beyond this it would be in vain

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to search after the Nature and Properties of Things without us. Our Ideas or Sensations, as excited by external Objects, are the Signs, Marks, or Notifiers of Things without us, which are capable of moving, and affect us after such or such a Manner; but these Sensations are no more the Images or Pictures of these Objects, than Words are the Images or Pictures of Ideas.

To exemplify all this, let us take any complex Idea derived from any Body, or external Object, as suppose *Gold*. To this complex Idea we affix the Name of the Substance or Thing without us, from which that Idea is deriv'd, and which is supposed to be the Object or Cause of it: Now here 'tis evident, that this complex Idea itself is the Subject or Substance of all the simple Ideas which enter into its Composition, *i. e.* the several constituent Parts considered as Properties, may be predicated or affirmed of the Whole as their common Subject or *Substance*. Thus when we say that *Gold* is yellow, ductile, fusible, and endued with a given Density or specific Gravity with respect to other Bodies, we can only mean that our complex Idea of Gold is made up, or compounded of the simple Ideas of yellow Colour, Ductility, Fusibility, proportional specific Gravity, &c. or which is the same Thing, that Gold is something without us, which is capable of being acted upon and differently modify'd, so as to excite in us  
such

such and such Ideas or Perceptions: But what that Object, Substance, or Thing without is, as existing in its own absolute Nature and *extra mentem*, we know not, nor is it possible we should know, unless we could make or create such a Thing. That Gold is something existing without us, that is capable of being acted upon, and differently modify'd with regard to the different Magnitude, Figure, Density, Structure and Cohesion of Parts, we know very well; and that in Consequence of this, it excites in us those several simple Ideas which we connect under the Name of *Gold*. But what this something without is, in its own absolute Nature, as existing *extra mentem*, or what that Power of Gravity, Cohesion, &c. is, by which it is thus modify'd and acted upon, we are intirely ignorant, and, I doubt, must for ever remain so, after all the Vanity of Philosophizing.

Thus much, however, we may conclude, that the different Modifications, or Modes of Existence of any Thing, whether of Mind or Matter, is nothing else but the Thing itself as differently modify'd or acted upon, so as to exist after such or such a Manner. Thus all the different Modifications of Motion, are Motion so modify'd, or existing in such a Manner: All the Modifications of Matter must be Matter differently existing, or differently acted upon; and all the Modifications of Thought, or conscious Mind, or Self-conscious-

consciousness, are Mind, Conscious-Self, or Thought under such or such a Mode of Existence. But how the different Modifications of Self-consciousness, or Conscious-Self, are united, individuated and sustain'd, as one intire Whole, so as to answer a Unity of Intention and Design, we shall then know, and be able to explain, when we know by what Power and Agency the several distinct, independent Parts of a Body cohere, and are moved and actuated together, so as to obtain the same End, Design or Purpose of the grand Geometer and Architect. But I must leave such Inquiries to mere Speculatists, who have Time and Inclination enough to spin out their Thoughts into Cobwebs, or empty, useless Schemes and Systems. The Reader, perhaps, may think this whole long Section a Digression, and yet I thought it almost necessary, to prevent too great a Mixture of Metaphysics with Morality, and lop off some of the Exuberancies of that Science, which for the most Part consists of Words without Ideas. But I shall now return to the moral, practical Subject where I left it, concerning human Liberty and Free-Agency.

§. 4. The Question here is, Whether Man be a free Agent, or whether what we call *Action*, can be any Thing more than mere *passive* impress'd Motion? Or, which is the same Thing, Whether Man be morally an accountable Creature, any more than a Horse,



or other brute Animal? The very Question here must seem shocking to any Man's natural common Sense, and nothing but a false Philosophy and Perversion of Reason, could have made such an Inquiry necessary.

1. Then, I shall here take it for granted, that Man is a rational Creature, or that he has a Faculty of perceiving Truth, and distinguishing it from Falshood: He is capable not only of feeling the present Pleasure or Pain of an Action, but of considering and viewing that Action in its abstract Nature and Tendency, Use and End, as connected with, or repugnant to his Happiness upon the Whole. This Capacity in Man, of intending or proposing an End, and pursuing it from the abstract Truth, Reason and Fitness of Things, I may assume as a Postulatum, since any one who should deny it, would be scarce admitted as a Man, and might be left to enjoy the Privileges of Brutality among his fellow Creatures.

2. The Idea of Agency or active Power, has no necessary Connexion with the Idea of rational Motive, Intention, or End of Action. Wherever there is a Power of acting with, there must be the same Power of acting without a Motive; for the Power of Acting, and the Motive or Reason of Action, are as perfectly different and distinct, as any two Ideas can be. And if the Power of Acting be different and distinct from the Motive

or Reason of Action, there must be a Power of acting arbitrarily and absolutely by mere Will and Pleasure, or with a *flat pro ratione voluntas*. If there could be no Action without a Reason or Motive, that Reason or Motive would be really the Agent; but who would say that Reasons and Motives are Agents, or endued with a Power of Acting?

They who talk in this Way, affect to compare the active self-determining Mind of Man, considered as an *Agent*, to a *Balance*, under the Force or Impression of contrary Weights, in which Case, the greater Weight must necessarily prevail and determine the Motion one Way or the other, to this Side or that. But a very little Attention must be sufficient to discover the great Absurdity of this: For 'tis evident, that a Balance, which is necessarily determined one Way or the other by a Preponderancy of Weight, where the Weights are equal on both Sides, the Machine must rest in *Æquilibrio*, and cannot move at all, or be determined one Way or the other. But the Mind in chusing or refusing, willing or nilling, doing or not doing an Action, once proposed to it, cannot possibly be in this State of Rest or Inaction. Any Action depending on the Will or self-determining Mind, being once proposed to our Thoughts, must be done, or not done; and forbearing the Action in this Case must be voluntary, and as much the Act of the

Mind or Will, as doing it. Suppose then the Motives or Reasons of Action, whatever they be, to be equal on both Sides; for as they are here conceiv'd to be equivalent to Weights, they may as well be equal as unequal: And then upon this Supposition, the Mind, in such a Case, could not act at all, but must be at perfect Rest, like the Balance, *i. e.* it could neither will nor nill, perform nor forbear the Action proposed to it, since either of these, in such a Case, must be voluntary, or an Act of the Will. But every one must see the Absurdity and Impossibility of such a Supposition, which quite destroys the Mechanism of such Philosophers. And to say that Motives act as Weights, or in the same Analogy and Proportion, and yet that they may not be equal as well as Weights, is to affirm and deny the same Thing, contrary to the Supposition.

The Mind, therefore, in this Case, not being determined by any Reason or Motive, one way more than the other, will be perfectly at Liberty to do or not do, to perform or forbear the Action proposed, by an absolute Self-determination: For a Man having no Reason or Motive for one more than the other, may either speak or be silent, sit still or stand up, by an arbitrary, absolute Act of the Will, and both, or either of them being voluntary, must be equally an Act of the Mind; but to suspend all Action in this Case,

or

or not to act one Way or the other, would be impossible.

But it will be said, if such a Power as this should be allow'd, such an Action would be perfectly indifferent, and could be of no moral Consideration at all. Such an Action could be neither good nor bad, and therefore, could answer no End or Purpose. I grant it, but then it proves all that I brought or urged it for, that the End, Purpose, Motive or Reason of Action, is not necessary to the Action itself, and consequently, that there is a Power of acting, or a self-moving Power, independent of these. And this being once supposed and granted, the Matter of Liberty or Free-Agency will easily be carry'd farther. For I assert,

3. That a Man has a Power of restraining the Gratification of any Desire, or suspending the Judgment, with regard to the Truth of any Proposition, against any bare Appearances of Probability or corrupt Bias, contrary to the Truth, Reason or Fitness of the Thing: Or in other Words, nothing but Truth, evident, irresistible Truth, can force the Judgment or Assent of the Mind; and therefore, no Error or false Judgment can be absolutely invincible. As the whole Question concerning Liberty or free moral Agency must depend upon the Proof of this Proposition, I shall consider it the more particularly and distinctly.



That there is a necessary, essential Difference between Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong, I believe no Man will deny. And since Truth is the adequate and sole Object of the Understanding or Mind, as intelligent, as much as visible Objects are of the Eye, a Man by the intellectual Faculty, can perceive and distinguish Truth from Falshood, and Right from Wrong, as well as the Eye can Light from Darknefs, or one Object from another. That Falshood should have the same Appearance and Manifestation to the Understanding as Truth, is as absurd and contradictory, as that Darknefs should have the Appearance and Manifestation of Light to the Eye or visive Faculty, since both must equally destroy the Faculties, and take away all Difference or Distinction of their Objects.

But here we must carefully distinguish between the Perception of the Understanding, with regard to its proper Objects, or the Ideas present to the Mind, and the Determination of the Judgment concerning the Truth and Falshood of Propositions. And this is the more necessary, as Perception and Judgment have been commonly confounded and spoken of without Distinction, as if they were one and the same Thing. And this, as I imagine, has been the principal Cause of all the Darknefs and Confusion we meet with in Discourses and Reasonings upon this Subject.

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All Perception, whether of Sense or Intellect, is necessary. Ideas in the Mind, are just such as they are, and cannot be otherwise; they are excited and determined by the Objects which impress them, and the Marks or Signatures must necessarily correspond to the Stamp, and cannot be alter'd by any Power, Will, or Choice of the Mind. No Man can turn the Idea of Red into Green, or White into Black, or convert the complex Idea of a Horse, into that of a Sheep or Calf. It is impossible for any Man, by any real Appearance or Perception in his Mind, to discover any other Relation but that of Equality between the Angles of a right-lined Triangle and two right Angles. These Perceptions and Appearances of Ideas and their Relations, as they really exist in the Mind, being natural and necessary, must, therefore, be true and right, and can never be denominated false or wrong.

But with respect to our Judgments, and the Conclusions we draw from them, the Case is quite otherwise. We cannot perceive wrong, or see what is not really visible, because not existing: But we judge wrong, we may draw Conclusions in the Dark, and without seeing, we may form Monsters of our own Imagination, and then rashly and precipitately, from Passion or Prejudice, pretend to see what is impossible to be perceived, because no where existing in Nature; and

this is really the Case of all Error and Falshood in Judgment. When a Man in such a Case declares or pronounces that Things *appear* so to him, or that he perceives such or such false Propositions to be true, he certainly belies his Senses, or his Reason, or both; for no Man can perceive the Truth of a false Proposition, no more than he can see the Light of perfect Darkness, or the Existence of what does not, or cannot exist: For to perceive the Truth of Falshood, is as repugnant to the Understanding, as to see the Light of Darkness is to Eyesight. Every wrong Judgment is a false Inference or Abuse of Reason, in which something is taken into the Conclusion, which was not in the Premises. While we confine our Judgment to our Perceptions, we cannot err or judge wrong, any more than we see or perceive wrong, where the Mind is purely passive. But when Men under great Error and Deception, cry out, that Things appear so to them; they can here mean nothing by the Appearance, but Belief or Judgment, which is a voluntary free Act of their own, and might have been suspended.

Nothing but Truth, intuitive or demonstrative, can absolutely necessitate the Judgment, or constrain the Assent of the Mind: But Truth thus appearing and perceived by the Understanding is irresistible, and we cannot suspend against it: But to judge or pronounce

nounce absolutely concerning the Truth of a Thing, before we have absolute irresistible Evidence for it, is carrying the Judgment beyond the Perception, or the Conclusion beyond the Premises; and this is the true and only Ground of all Deception and Error. While a Man suspends his Judgment so far as he can, and yields his Assent no farther than the Perception or Evidence amounts to, he makes a right Use of his Liberty, and preserves himself from Error; but when he suffers his Assent to go beyond the Evidence or Appearance of Truth to his Understanding, he so far judges arbitrarily, absolutely by mere Will and Pleasure, without Evidence, or without any real Cause or Reason of Judgment, which, therefore, cannot be necessary. A Man, in this Case, wilfully shuts his Eyes, and resolves what to believe and do, whether he has any Evidence or Reason for it or not. In this Case, a Man makes not Truth the Rule of his Judgment or Actions, but suffers his Appetites or Passions to govern and determine him; and then looking upon Truth as his Enemy, he sets himself against it, and resolutely maintains some other Cause in Opposition to it.

Herein then consists free Agency, or the Liberty of human Actions, *viz.* in a Power of suspending the Judgment and consequent Choice and Pursuit, in order to a thorough Examination, and till proper Evidence shall appear,



appear, and then carrying the Assent no farther than the Evidence, Perception or Appearance of Truth. This is moral probationary Liberty, or the Liberty of a Creature under moral Government, who being liable to Error, and accountable for his Actions, is to be rewarded or punished accordingly. It was necessary that such a Creature should have it in his Power to guard himself against criminal Error, and that no punishable Error or Action might be necessary or invincible: And, therefore, that nothing but Truth, clear, invincible Truth, can necessitate the Judgment or consequent Practice, must, I think, be plain enough from what has been said, to those who are willing to see it.

§. 5. But there is another Notion and View of Liberty or free Agency, applicable to the Deity himself, or to such intelligent Beings, whose intellectual Perfections and Clearness of Understanding, set them above all moral Deception or organical Conduct; And here lies an Objection against Liberty or free Agency, which must affect the Supreme Being, and all intelligent Beings or Agents whatever: For if Truth, evident intuitive Truth, as appearing to, and perceiv'd by the Understanding, necessitates the Judgment and Choice, it must follow, that God himself cannot be a free Agent, or cannot will, chuse, and act otherwise than he does: For the Perception of intuitive

or demonstrative Truth being irresistible, and necessarily determining the Agent in his Judgment and Choice, and the Deity intuitively perceiving all Truth, it is evident, that he cannot act contrary to Truth, but necessarily do what in its own Nature is best and fittest to be done; and, therefore, there can be no such Thing as Liberty or free Choice in Nature. This Difficulty, which has so much puzzled and perplex'd the Metaphysicians, arises only from confounding the Power of acting with the Reason or Motive of the Action, which yet are as different and distinct Ideas as any in the Mind. The Power of doing or not doing a Thing, is very different from the Reason or Motive of doing or not doing it. A wise and righteous Being will always act upon the rational Motives and Fitness of the Action, and cannot, as a *wise and righteous Being*, do otherwise; but this is not from the Want of *Power*, but from the *Rectitude of Will*. It is usual enough in common speaking to say, that a good Man cannot act wickedly, or do an ill Thing; and nobody thinks this is for Want of Power. Whether a Man acts right or wrong, whether he does Good or Mischief, he can have no *Blame*, if he had not, at the same Time, a *Power* of doing otherwise. No Criminal, in this Case, could blame himself, or own a just Sentence; and no good Man or righteous Person, could plead any Merit or Reward-  
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ableness: This is the natural, necessary Consequence of such an Hypothesis, which cannot be assumed by any virtuous and good Man, with a *right Understanding* and *good Intention*; and yet a Man, with such an Hypothesis, may be a weak *good Man*, or a *designing Knave*; and one of these he must be, while his Hypothesis, generally received and acted upon, would be infinitely mischievous to Mankind. That this would be the Consequence of such an Hypothesis or Principle generally received and acted upon, is, I think, evident beyond all Contradiction; and I have never yet met with a *Fatalist*, but would own this in private Trust, that his Hypothesis, tho' *true*, is not *good*, or fit to be generally known and received. Herein, I believe, I wrong no Man in this Way of thinking; at least, no Man that I have ever had any free Conversation or Acquaintance with.

There must, therefore, be some Difference or Distinction between the *Power* and *Motive* of Action. To confound these, and to make the *Motive* the Agent or *Cause* of *Action*, is to blend Heaven and Earth, Light and Darkness, and to destroy all Distinction between *Physics* and *Ethics*, or between acting with or without Reason. I have said thus much, because the natural Reason or common Sense of the Thing must strike every Man, without being a *Metaphysician* or *speculative Philosopher*. But

how some *speculative Moralists* can explain this, and prove that there is no *moral* or possible avoidable *Difference* between a *wise Man* and a *Fool*, or between an *honest Man* and a *Knave*, may deserve a farther Inquiry. And this is the Question which I must now discuss.

§. 6. I shall here assume a Postulatum or two, which I think must be granted, and which are these.

1. No rational intelligent Being can will or chuse what he does not think or judge to be eligible or fit to be chosen. To will or chuse what is not eligible in the present Judgment of the Agent, is the same Contradiction, as to do what is not possible or adequate to the Power of such an Agent; for the Choice of an uneligible Thing, or what cannot be chosen, is the same Absurdity and Contradiction, as the doing an impossible Thing; the one is a Contradiction to *Power*, the other is the same Contradiction to *Will* or *Choice*.

2. To an infinite or perfect Understanding, there can be no Difference or Distinction between *real* and *apparent* Good, or between the *Judgment* and the *Truth* of Things. This is the necessary Consequence of Infallibility or unerring Judgment, and, therefore, to suppose Fallibility or wrong Judgment in the Deity, is the same Contradiction in the Nature and Reason of Things,



as to suppose him not to exist, or not to be omniscient.

From these two Postulata it must necessarily follow, *1st*. That God cannot err; and *2dly*. That Man may. And from hence a Question of great Importance will arise, *i. e.* Whether Man, in all his false Judgments, is as necessarily mistaken, as God is in the right; or whether *Falshood* necessitates the Judgment and Choice as much as *Truth*? And, which amounts to this Question, Whether there be any discoverable or discernible Difference to human Understandings between *Truth* and *Falshood*? This is, doubtless, a Question which a Man of common Sense and common Understanding would easily resolve: But philosophical, speculative Atheism, cannot be reduced within any such Bounds. Men of Speculation and a true philosophical Genius, can prove that White is Black, Darkness Light, and Falshood Truth; or that Man must be morally *false* and *wicked*, by the same Necessity that he is naturally *fallible* and *not omniscient*.

§. 7. Every one must see that this is a Question of great Importance, and that all Difference betwixt *natural* and *moral Right* and *Wrong*, *True* and *False*, with respect to human Understanding, must depend upon it: And, therefore, it is certainly a Question which ought to be narrowly sifted and search'd to the Bottom.

§. 8. To bring this Matter to some Issue, I shall endeavour to demonstrate the Truth of this Proposition, *That no Error or false Judgment is absolutely invincible.*

I say then, That Man, as a rational intelligent Being, or Agent, has a Power, and is at Liberty to suspend his Judgment concerning the Truth of a Proposition, or to restrain the Gratification of any particular Desire, till, after a strict and careful Examination, he discovers where the Truth lies, or on which Side the greater Probability rests. The exercising this Power and Liberty so far as it will go, or suspending the Judgment and Choice till the Evidence and Necessity of the Thing, as appearing to the Understanding, constrains it, is that rational Use of Liberty and Power, which is absolutely necessary to guard us from Error in Judgment and Practice, and to secure to ourselves the great End of all intelligent, dependent Beings, which is *Happiness*. And a Man never exposes himself to any mischievous Error, or runs into any hurtful, destructive Measures, but by judging and acting either without or against his own Reason and Understanding; and this he always does, whenever he suffers his Judgment, Resolution or Decision to go beyond the Appearance and Perception of Truth to the Mind.

I must here resume a Distinction which I had made between the Perception of the Understanding, or Appearance of Truth to the Mind,

Mind, and a Man's practical Judgment, Decision and Choice thereupon. Nothing can be more evident, than that Men may, and often do judge and act contrary to all the Perceptions and Appearances of Truth to their Understandings: For Falshood can no more be perceived or appear as Truth to the Understanding, than Darkness can appear and confound itself with Light to the Eye. To say, that there is not a necessary, essential Difference in Nature between Truth and Falshood, would be to destroy all Principles of Reason, and make every Thing both true and false, or neither true nor false, or true and false alike. And to say, that the human Understanding cannot perceive and distinguish between Truth and Falshood, would be to deny the Faculty, as much as it would be denying a Man's Faculty of Seeing, to say, that he cannot by Sight distinguish Light from Darkness, or one Colour and Shade of Light from another; but that Men may judge and act without the Perception or natural Appearance of Truth to the Understanding, is as certain, as that they may walk without seeing, or wilfully shut their Eyes and resolve to run on in the Dark. But when a Man thus wilfully and resolutely shuts his Eyes till he is fallen into a Ditch, or lost past Recovery, would it not be perfectly absurd and ridiculous to excuse himself by saying, that it seem'd fair and smooth to him, and that he

he could see no such Ditch or Precipice. Such a Pretence or Excuse would scarce move Compassion, or justify his Fall, when from some Prejudice to the Light, he had chosen Darkness, to avoid the Pain and Trouble of Seeing: And yet this is the very Excuse which Men commonly make in their wrong Judgments and Choice, as if there was not as necessary and essential a Difference between Truth and Falshood, as between Light and Darkness; or that the Understanding could not as well perceive and distinguish the one, as the Eye can the other. When, therefore, a Man being convicted of some gross Error or false Judgment, will say, that he verily thought himself in the Right, and that the Thing *appear'd* so to him; what does he mean by this *Appearance*? Nothing certainly but the *false Judgment* itself, which is the very Fault he is chargeable with, and cannot be its own Excuse. That Falshood should be as Truth to the Understanding, and be perceiv'd as such, is as impossible and contrary to Nature, as that Darkness should appear, and be perceiv'd by the Eye, as clear as Sun-shine. But in such a Case, a Man does not see or perceive, but only presumes, and then he calls Believing, Seeing: He wilfully shuts his Eyes, and resolves to walk on in the Dark; his Judgment is absolute and arbitrary, and not constrain'd by any Light or Evidence of Truth, because it is not Truth, but some-  

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thing else that he seeks, which he loves and likes better.

Nothing but the irresistible Light or Evidence of Truth, either intuitively, or demonstratively perceived, can ever over-bear the Judgment, or necessitate and constrain the Assent of the Mind. Against such Evidence, a Man cannot suspend his Judgment, or withhold his Assent; and therefore, in this Case, the Judgment or Decision of the Mind is no longer free, any more than the necessary Perception itself. To judge contrary to the necessary Truth and Evidence of Things, appearing to, and perceiv'd by the Understanding, is as impossible as to create the Perceptions, or to make Truth to be any Thing else but what it is.

In this Case of perceiving intuitive or demonstrative Truth, the Judgment or Decision of the Mind concerning it, is so necessarily and immediately connected with the Perception, to be scarce distinguishable from it. But in other Cases, where there is Room for doubting, or a Power of suspending and withholding our Assent, the Distinction and real Difference betwixt the Perception and Judgment is very observable, and what every Man must find in himself, who will attend to it, and reflect upon what passes within him. While we have a Power of suspending against the different Weight or Appearance of Probability on both Sides, every one finds his  
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Judgment to be a free Act, and that it is not any Way necessitated or constrain'd.

§. 9. The Perception of the Understanding or Appearance of Truth to the Mind, is either absolute, or relative and comparative; or, which is the same Thing, certain and scientific, or probable only. Certainty or scientific Evidence, leaves no Room for doubting, or Possibility of suspending the Judgment against it. Certainty to the Understanding, is the perceiv'd Necessity of a Thing, and Impossibility of the contrary; and in this Case, as the Judgment is necessary, so it is infallible, and the Mind not subject to Error, or liable to Deception. A Man, indeed, may confound Certainty and Demonstration, with Uncertainty and Falshood, in Words and blind arbitrary Persuasion, but he cannot in Idea or Perception. His Tongue may belie his Judgment, or his Judgment may decide and determine in the Dark, by Affection, Passion, or blind Impulse; but this is not Certainty, Evidence, or the Perception of Truth. Yet such is the voluntary, contracted Weakness of Mankind, that the Defects of the Understanding are seldom perceived, and more rarely acknowledged. The Myops will own his Short-sightedness, and a blind Man will confess that he cannot see; but with respect to the Intellect, no Man is so sure of his quick Sight and deep Penetration, as he who is stark blind. The Reasons of this may be

farther inquired into afterwards, and then it will plainly appear, that *Necessity* is not the *true Cause*.

§. 10. Besides that absolute, scientific Certainty or Perception of Truth, as observ'd and considered in the last Section, there is another Sort of Evidence which comes but little short of it as to its Invincibility upon the Judgment; and tho' it amounts not to absolute, infallible Certainty, yet may be the Ground of an absolute, indubitable Persuasion or Decision of Judgment. This is what we may call a *Certainty of Sense*, which is the highest judicial Evidence, or utmost Certainty that Matters of Fact are capable of. This Evidence of Sense may be so clear and strong, as to leave no Room for doubting, or Possibility of Suspence. A Man has little more Power to doubt of what he sees or hears under a right and due Disposition of the Object, Medium and Organ; he can no more doubt or suspend, I say, in this, than of what he is scientifically and demonstratively certain of: And what a Number or Multitude have the same Evidence of Sense? For at once it is still the more indubitable, as this joint Perception and Testimony strengthens and confirms the Truth and Certainty of the Thing to each Individual, and to others to whom the same may be reported and attested in this Case more than the clear Perception and Evidence of the Senses; for any  
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common natural Facts depending on ordinary natural Causes, must be admitted as a Degree and Kind of Certainty that can no more be doubted of or deny'd, than Demonstration itself. Where there is this Certainty of Reason, therefore, with respect to scientific Truths, or of Sense, with regard to natural Facts, a Man has it not in his Power, or is not at Liberty to deny or doubt of Things under such Evidence. In these Cases a Man cannot judge or determine wrong, or suspend his Judgment against evident, indubitable Truth, if he would. And while a Man confines his Judgment and Determination to his fix'd, ascertain'd Ideas, and affirms, pronounces, or decides nothing but what he sees or evidently perceives, it is impossible he should judge or determine wrong, since it is impossible for any Man to see or perceive the Truth of a false Proposition, or the Goodness of an evil Action. To say that the Understanding, by any real Existence or natural Relation of Ideas in the Mind, can perceive Falshood to be Truth, Wrong to be Right, or Evil to be Good, is an express Contradiction, and denying all Difference or Distinction in Nature between Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong, Good and Evil. And thus a blind Man may, very positively and dogmatically, insist upon the most perfect Eye-Sight, and condemn others as perfectly and wilfully blind, who cannot see



what he pretends to see plainly with his Eyes shut. But here a very great Difficulty arises between the seeing and blind Men, and such is the Perplexity of the Case, that it cannot easily be discovered who has, or has not Eye-Sight: This Question we find not so difficult to resolve where Certainty can be had, whether of *Reason* or scientific Truth, or of the immediate Perception and Evidence of the Senses: The grand Question does not arise from any Certainty or indubitable Evidence, either of *Reason* or *Sense*, but from a Principle of *Faith*, *Credulity* or *Presumption*, which is above *Reason* and *Sense* too. How this comes about, deserves to be considered and set in a short and clear Point of View; and this I shall endeavour to do in the next Section.

§. 11. I have considered the two indubitable Kinds or Degrees of Evidence, the scientific Certainty of Reason, and the Certainty of Fact, as convey'd by the immediate, indubitable Conviction and Testimony of the Senses. Concerning this natural Evidence and indubitable Indications of Truth, there has been hitherto very little Difference or Division of Mankind; they have been very well agreed, and no dangerous Consequences have arisen, so far as they have kept to the natural Boundaries and Measures of Truth; but there is another Rule or Measure of Judgment, which is call'd *Probability*, *Belief* or *Opinion*. I do not here distinguish between *Probability*  
and

and *Opinion*, because every Man's *Opinion*, well or ill grounded, is his *Probability*; and if the Man be a *Dogmatist* or *true Believer*, his *Opinion* is not only his *Probability*, but his *Certainty* and *Demonstration*.

To set this Matter, therefore, in a somewhat clearer Light, it will be necessary to consider the Nature and Reason of what we call *Probability*, and how far we may form any rational Judgment about it. In most of the Affairs of common Life, and the several Questions which come before us to be deliberated and resolved upon, there is no absolute, indubitable Certainty to be had on one Side or the other, there are Reasons and Appearances of Truth *pro* and *con*, and a Possibility of Truth and Falshood on both Sides: We have not all the Articles which might be necessary to settle and adjust the Account, and to ascertain on which Side the Truth lies: In this Case, the fairest Appearance of Truth may deceive us, and what appears to us, for all that we can see, to bid fairest for Truth, may be really and absolutely false. It is evident, therefore, that in such a Case no Appearances of Probability, no partial, imperfect View of Things can determine any Thing of real, absolute Truth, on one Side or the other. Some yet unknown Article of the Account, not observed or given in, may alter the whole State of the Case, and throw the Truth on the other Side, after the best

Judgment of Probability we have been able to form. In this, therefore, the Mind can only act the Part of a fair Accomptant, by settling and adjusting the Account upon what is given in, without concluding or deciding any Thing of the real, absolute State of the Case. There are still other Articles behind which cannot yet be got, some of which, when they come to be considered and duly apply'd, may be of great Weight, and throw the Balance on the other Side: But from what yet appears, or from the Evidence hitherto considered, the greater Advantage or Weight of Truth lies on that Side to which the Judgment of Probability has placed it. Now every one must see, that such a Judgment of Probability, and the Evidence upon which it proceeds, can determine nothing about Truth, real or absolute. What appears most probable upon a partial View, may be really and absolutely false. There is scarce any Man but by farther Enquiry, and stricter Search, has found many Things to be really and certainly true, which he had before thought highly improbable, or certainly false; there is the same Difference here, as between absolute and relative, or true and apparent *Motion*. A Man who judges only by Sense, and has no other Way to rectify the Account, would conclude that the Earth is at perfect Rest, and that the Sun and Stars move from East to West once in 24 Hours; and this would

would be apparent, or probable Truth to him; and yet it is certain and demonstrable, that the Sun and Stars, in this Case, are at Rest, and that the real absolute Motion is of the Earth, which moves about its Axis the contrary Way, or from West to East, once in the 24 Hours; and there is no Man but might be sensibly convinced of the real and necessary Difference between true and apparent Motion. Thus a Man being in a Ship, in a smooth calm Water, sailing one Way, the Land and Shoars would appear to him as moving the contrary Way, and yet he would be sure that the true Motion is of the Ship, and not of the Land.

§. 12. This Distinction between Truth, absolute and relative, or between Certainty and Probability, Opinion or Conjecture, is so very necessary, that without it no Man can think or reason right about any Thing. Confounding Truth, real and absolute, with what is so relatively and apparently only, is the Ground of every wrong Judgment, and of every Aberration from Truth and Reason in Practice. He who perceives Truth in its natural, necessary Evidence, intuitively or demonstratively, has it not in his Power, or is not at Liberty to suspend against, or remain in the least Doubt of it; and in this Case, a Man cannot err in his Judgment or consequent Practice from such a Perception of Truth and Rectitude. Any Man, by a little Reflexion, must see,



see, that Probable or Improbable respect only the Appearance, and not the Truth of Things: For Probability, arising only from our partial, imperfect Views of Things, can never be a certain Mark or Indication of Truth to the Mind; what is very probable to one Man, may be as improbable to another, but Truth is the same to every Mind which really and actually perceives it. A Man may be mistaken and deceiv'd in the fairest Appearances of Probability, and, therefore, there must be a necessary, essential Difference between *Truth* and *Probability*, since there is no natural Connexion between them; and there may be one where there is not the other. And from hence it is evident, that the Perception and Judgment of *Probability*, is a perfectly different and distinct Thing from the Perception and Judgment of *Truth*. A Man who perceives Truth in its natural, necessary Evidence, cannot be mistaken, or in any Doubt about it; but he who has a Perception of Probability only, can be under no Necessity of confounding it with Truth, or of concluding it to be therefore true, because it appears probable to him. There is no Man but must have had Instances enough in which Things have appear'd very probable to him, which he has found afterwards not to be true, tho' he might have pronounced so by ever so absolute and positive a Judgment. And therefore, every Man who would guard himself

himself against Error and Delusion, ought to be very careful how he confounds Truth with his own Appearances, Opinions and Conjectures about it.

Since then there is a natural, essential Difference between the Perception of Truth, real and absolute, and Truth relative or apparent only, or between *Certainty* and *Probability*, it is manifest that no Appearances of Probability, or opinionative, conjectural Truth, can necessitate a Judgment of *absolute* or *real* Truth. The Mind being purely passive in its Perceptions or Appearances to the Understanding, cannot alter them, or make them otherwise than they really are; but it may put a Cheat upon itself on the Judgment or Conclusion drawn from it, and thereby infer a false Consequence, or draw a wrong Conclusion from right Premises; and this is really the Case in every wrong Judgment and Choice of the Mind. The Perception of Certainty must necessitate the Judgment of Certainty, and the Perception of Probability must necessitate a Judgment of Probability; but Probability can necessitate or affect the Judgment no farther than the Evidence. The Appearance or Perception of Probability cannot necessitate a Judgment of Certainty, or of Truth, absolute and real; what is perceiv'd as certain, must be judged certain, and what appears probable, must be judged probable; but there can be no Error or Deception in  
this.

this. If a Man argues thus, I have an intuitive or demonstrative Perception of such a Proposition, and therefore, it is absolutely and certainly true, he argues right, and cannot be mistaken. Or, if he concludes, that such a Proposition appears probable to me, and therefore, to me it is probable, he is certainly right, and cannot be mistaken so far. But if he will argue thus, or draw such a Conclusion as this, such a Proposition appears to me *probable*, and therefore it is *true*, or I must, therefore, judge or believe it to be really and absolutely *true*; in this Case he deceives himself by carrying his Conclusion beyond his Premises, and judging or believing what he does not, and cannot see or perceive; and this is his own absolute, arbitrary Act or Presumption, without Reason or Necessity.

Every Man who will reflect, must be conscious to himself, that he has a Power, and is at Liberty to suspend his Judgment against any Appearances of bare Probability, till he has thoroughly examined the Matter, and maturely weigh'd the Evidence on both Sides. A Man who judges and decides upon any doubtful Point, before he has done this, must be conscious of his acting thus freely, rashly and presumptuously, without any Necessity or Constraint that he was under, either external or internal. And in Consequence of this, a Man who is but just and true to himself, must unavoidably censure and condemn

damn his own Conduct; his own Reason and Conscience must convict him, that he herein abused that Power and Liberty which he had and might have exercised, of suspending and farther examining. And whatever be the Consequence of such an Abuse of Liberty, a Man must, upon a little sober Reflexion, charge upon himself as his own free, arbitrary, unconstrain'd Will and Choice.

§. 13. I take this Reasoning on the Side of *Liberty* to be demonstrative, and know of no Objection to it, but what has been already obviated. The Prejudices of Education are almost invincible, and when a Man runs out of this into any contrary Extreme, his Error is not much less invincible than before: But then, when he comes to see the Errors and false Principles of his Education, and that his Nurses, Masters and Catechisers had instructed him wrong, he is not so easily brought off from his accidental Error, on the other Side; and thus Credulity and Incredulity have their Turns in the Conduct of Mankind. And he who has believ'd every Thing upon Authority, without Reasoning, having once thrown off that Authority, is afterwards almost incapable of any rational Conviction; and this I take to be the Case between *Faith* and *Reason*, when both have been equally abused. The Name of *Faith* having set aside *Reason*, the Name of *Reason* shall afterwards set aside all *Faith*; and thus



a blind Credence makes Way for as unreasonable an Incredulity, and from believing every Thing we had been taught, we come to believe nothing that can be proved; and this is certainly the Case between the blind *Believer* and the blind *Reasoner*; and this is what I shall now endeavour to exemplify, with regard to the *Reasoners* against *human Liberty* or *free Agency*.

“Man, say they, tho’ a rational, intelligent Being, cannot be a *free Agent*; for the Will must necessarily follow the last Dictate of the Understanding, concerning what is true or false, fit or not fit to be done. No Man can act without some Motive or Reason of Action, either within or without him; but these Motives or Reasons of Action, are the necessary Impressions of Objects without, or the necessary Frame and Constitution of the Mind within. And therefore, all Action is necessary, either from within or without, and there can be no such Thing as *free Agency*.”

I think I had abundantly shew’d the Weakness of this Sort of Reasoning before; and yet, perhaps, the Gentlemen on this Side the Question would never have thought it sufficient, had I not put the Objection in Form, and reply’d to the several Parts of it.

1. That no Man can act rationally without a rational Motive, real or apparent, is very certain, since the contrary Supposition would

would be a plain, exprefs Contradiction: But that every rational Motive, real or apparent, is invincible, and neceffitates the Agent, is evidently falfe, from what has been prov'd already. This would be denying the Power of fufpending the Judgment againft the Appearances of bare Probability, which would be denying Man to be a rational, intelligent Being. And 'tis great Pity, methinks, that Men of exalted Reason fhould renounce their Humanity. No Doubt but every Action of Confequence, or every moral Act, muft be done to fome End, or upon fome Motive or other; for otherwife it would not be a rational Act. But 'tis furely wonderful that Philofophers and learned Men fhould not diftinguifh between the *End* and the *Agent*, or between acting upon a Motive, and being acted upon by the Motive. The End or Motive is the moral Ground or Reason of the Action, but not the Efficient or Cause of it; for Ends and Motives are not Agents.

2. Nothing can be more abfurd and extravagant, than comparing Motives and Reasons in the *Mind*, to an externally impreff'd Force upon *Bodies*: The very Comparifon is a Demonftration of the quite contrary to what it is brought and designed for. A Body externally impreff'd with a given Quantity of Motion or *moving Force*, cannot fufpend that Motion, or give it any other Direction, from the Confideration of its being wrong, or not agreeable to the

the Nature and Reason of Things. But Motives and Reasons in the Mind are intrinsic, and essential to the Mind itself; and to act upon Motives and Reasons, is the very same Thing as to be a *Self-mover*, or to act by an intrinsic, essential Principle of Self-Motion, or Self-Determination.

§. 14. The Distinction between active and passive, is the same as between intelligent and unintelligent *Power*. Power, directed and determined by Intelligence, or guided, limited and modify'd by the Truth, Reason and Nature of Things, is *active Power*; for such an intellectual Perception or View of Truth, Reason and Fitness, is absolutely superior to, and independent of all Sensation, Appetite or Instinct, and therefore, cannot be necessitated by any mere animal Impressions of Matter and Motion from without. This Independency of Truth, Reason and Fitness on any of the mere bodily or animal Pains and Pleasures, and the Power of acting and determining ourselves conformable or agreeable to the one, in Opposition to the other, is that which constitutes the Liberty of *intelligent* or moral *free Agents*.

A Beast or irrational Animal, having no Power or Faculty of perceiving Truth in the general, abstract Nature and Consequences of Things, must necessarily be determined by such Sensations, Appetites and Instinct, by which the Author of Nature governs and directs

directs the inferior or mere animal Part of the Creation. Whatever may be the Consequence of such a Determination, the Creature cannot be accountable for it, or act in any Respect otherwise, as having no other Motive, Power or Principle of Action. But in rational, intelligent Agents, the Case is certainly and evidently otherwise; for here no Sensation, Appetite or Passion, can necessitate the Judgment, Will or Choice, against the Nature, Reason, and Consequences of Things, as perceiv'd by the Understanding. No Man can be necessitated to the Gratification of any Appetite or Passion, while he sees that such Gratification would, in its necessary Consequences, be a vastly greater Evil, than the Pleasure of the present Enjoyment could be a Good to him. He can suspend the Gratification of any such Appetite or Desire, as incomparably a greater Evil than Good upon the Whole, or in its Nature and Consequences. In such a Case, therefore, for a Man to plead Incapacity, or an Impossibility of acting otherwise, when he wilfully and presumptuously complies with Appetite against Reason, would be perfectly unnatural and absurd, as he must hereby deny himself to be intelligent, renounce his Reason, and declare himself a mere Brute, and that he had no higher, or superior Principle to guide and direct him, than the Beasts of the Field.

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Nothing can be more absurd, than what is here commonly urged to the contrary, that every Man must necessarily act upon the strongest and most prevailing Motive, as appearing to the Understanding: For it is very evident, that a Man is under no Necessity of using his Reason or Understanding at all in directing his Actions, but is at Liberty whether he will do it or not. A Man may wilfully and obstinately shut his Eyes against the Truth, and resolve not to see it, or to gratify his Appetites in spite of it. And this is commonly the Case, as every Man's own Reason and Conscience must tell him, as often as he contradicts moral Truth and Fitness in his Actions. He must necessarily stand self-condemn'd, and while he labours to excuse himself to others, he is still a Criminal in his own Breast, and cannot acquit himself in the Court and at the Tribunal of Conscience.

To say that a Man, employing his Reason, and making the best Use he can of his Understanding, may not be able to perceive moral Good from Evil, but that Virtue may appear to him as Vice, Wrong to be Right, and Falshood to be Truth, would be denying the Intelligence, or Rationality of Man, and affirming that there is really no Difference between moral Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong, Virtue and Vice, or that there is no Power or Faculty in human Nature to perceive

ceive and distinguish one from the other; but he who should affirm or suppose this, must be incapable of any Argument or rational Conviction.

I think it has been fully and sufficiently proved, that the Understanding is a Faculty which distinguishes between Truth and Falseness, Right and Wrong, Fit and Unfit, as the Eye does between Light and Darkeness, or the different Shades and Appearances of visible Objects; and that it is the very same Absurdity and Contradiction to confound those intellectual Appearances to the Understanding, as it would be to confound the different Appearances of Light and Colours to the Eye. To confound the Perceptions of the Understanding with the Decisions of Judgment or Choice, is the very same Absurdity as not to distinguish between *Seeing* and *Walking*; for tho' a Man cannot see what is not visible, yet he may walk without seeing, and resolve to run on in the Dark, especially if seeing gives him some Pain, and walking in the Dark was pleasant to him. But if a Man should hereby run into a Ditch, or dash himself to Pieces off a Precipice, it would be thought but an idle Excuse to say, that opening his Eyes was painful to him, and that the Pleasure of Darkeness was too strong for his visive Faculty. But this, however, is the Strength, or rather Weakness of the Argument for *Necessity*, since nothing can be urged against *free Agency*, but

what must hold as strongly against *Intelligence*, or any Principle of Reason, superior to Sense.

§. 15. After what has been hitherto said, we may now, perhaps, with greater Advantage, consider the Difference or Distinction which ought to be made between physical and moral Liberty, or free Agency. Physical free Agency consists in a Power of acting or not acting, of doing or not doing a Thing, or of performing or forbearing any given or proposed Action. This absolute Power of acting is to be considered simply, and in itself, as abstracted from any Reason, Motive, Fitness or Unfitness of the Action or Thing done. Wherever there is a Power of acting or doing any Thing, there must be the same Power of not acting, or not doing it; and to suppose the contrary, would be an express Contradiction. As this absolute, physical Power of acting is, in its Idea and Conception, perfectly distinct and different from any Reason or Motive of Action, it must, consequently, be independent of it, and may exist, and be exerted absolutely and arbitrarily by mere Will and Pleasure. This simple, absolute Power of acting, which is *physical* free Agency or Liberty, is purely *natural*, and can come under no moral Consideration at all; for where no End is proposed, or no Reason or Motive of acting considered, there can be nothing of moral Good or Evil, Right or Wrong in the Action.

Action. Such an Action would be a blind, unintelligent Exertion of mere Power, without Reason, Wisdom or Design.

But moral Agency consists in a Power of acting or not acting, of doing or not doing a Thing, as such Action shall appear to the Understanding to be right or wrong, good or evil, fit or unfit. So far as a Man has this Power, and can do whatever he thinks best and fittest to be done, he is a moral Agent, or morally free: But where he has not this Power, he is not an Agent at all, but under Necessity, or a mere passive Sufferer.

But here it must be observ'd, that no moral Agent, as such, can chuse or prefer any Thing which appears to him to be not eligible or preferable: Since this would be a Contradiction, by supposing a Man to chuse and not chuse, prefer and not prefer the same Thing, at the same Time; which is impossible. But then this Impossibility does not arise from the Idea of abstract, physical Power, but of intelligent, moral Power. A Man who has a physical or natural Power to save himself, has the same Power to destroy himself; he can leap into a Fire, as well as fly from it, because it requires no more Force or Power to do one than the other, and both are equally adequate to the Man's natural Strength. And since he is under no extrinsic, superior Force or Compulsion either Way, he is as much at Liberty, with regard to his na-



tural Power, to do one as the other: But then every one must see that this would be only a blind, unintelligent Power and Liberty, not guided or directed by any Understanding or Reason; because Self-Preservation and Happiness is the natural, necessary Object of Choice, and Self-Destruction cannot be chosen by any rational, intelligent Being; but this can be no Argument against Liberty or free Agency: For who would say that a Man is not at Liberty to chuse or refuse, to will or nill, because he cannot both chuse and refuse, or will and nill the same Thing. To say a Man cannot chuse or prefer Evil or Self-Destruction, is only saying that he cannot chuse or will what he is supposed to nill and refuse, since the Judgment of Choice or Preference is either the Will itself, the real Act of willing, or something necessarily connected with it, and not to be distinguished from it. It would be a Contradiction to suppose a Man to chuse what he judges to be evil or not eligible, since he must then chuse and refuse, will and nill the same Thing. But it will not follow from hence, that, therefore, a Man is not at Liberty to chuse and refuse as he thinks fit, or as he judges a Thing to be good or evil. And I have, already, largely prov'd, that the Judgment, in this Case is, and always must be free, where it is not necessitated by Truth, and the necessary Evidence of Things; or that a Man has always

a Power of suspending his Judgment and Choice against any bare Appearances of Probability, where there is not strict and proper Certainty; and this is the very Point in which all human Liberty or moral free Agency consists.

§. 16. It is very common in this Argument to compare divine and human Agency; and by proving that God must always do what is best and fittest to be done, it is from hence concluded, that, therefore, Man must necessarily do what is not best and fittest to be done. A very strange Conclusion this, that because Truth is necessary, therefore, Falshood and Error must be necessary too, and that God must be as much the Author and Fountain of one as of the other. It is true, that Man is at Liberty whether he will make Truth and Reason the Rule of his Actions or not; he is free from any necessary Restraints of Reason; he can shut his Eyes and run on in the Dark; he can bid Defiance to his Understanding, and give himself up to the Conduct and Controul of his Passions; he is at Liberty to break loose from all the Laws of Truth and Reason, and to play the Fool, and the Madman, if he will desperately resolve upon it. But such a Liberty and Loose from Reason as this, cannot be conceived or admitted in the Deity, who being omniscient, and absolutely perfect, cannot be supposed to act contrary to his own Nature and

necessary Perfections, without supposing him to be what he is not, and cannot be, which Supposition must destroy itself, as being an immediate express Contradiction and Repugnancy of Ideas.

But Man, who is a Creature under moral Government, and in a State of Probation, is at Liberty to do either Good or Evil; and to act right or wrong; he may submit to the Law of his rational Nature, and the Guidance of Truth, or freely and presumptuously give himself up to Sense, Appetite and Passion.

But this Opposition of Sense and Appetite to Reason, argues Imperfection and Degeneracy from the Law of rational Nature. The highest Perfection of an intelligent Being, is the Power and Liberty of doing whatever, in the Nature and Reason of Things, is best and fittest to be done. The certain, unerring Perception of what is best and fittest, and the Power of doing it without any possible Opposition or Controul, is the most absolute Power, Liberty and Perfection that can be conceived of or supposed; and this is the Power, Liberty, and absolute Perfection of God himself.

The Argument against physical Liberty or free Agency, as brought by great Philosophers and very learned Men, is rather pleasant than serious. They argue against Liberty or free Agency in God, because he has not,

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it seems, the Power or Perfection of Impotence, Blindness, or Evil-doing: Because there can be no Difference or Distinction between real and apparent Truth with the Deity, but every Thing must necessarily be judged of as it is; therefore, there is no Liberty or active Power in God. And because Man has a Power, and is at Liberty to shut his Eyes, and act contrary to Truth, Nature and Reason, therefore he is necessitated to it. But the great Weakness and Absurdity of all this has been now sufficiently considered and exposed.

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CHAP. VI. SECT. I.

*Of the Kind and Degrees of moral Right and Wrong, and the Causes of moral Error.*

**M**ORAL Truth, as I have observed, consists in the Relation of Agreement, or Congruity of Sentiments, Dispositions and Actions, to the Nature, Reason, and Fitness of Things. And this Nature, Reason, and Fitness of Things, with respect to such Sentiments,



timents, Tempers and Actions, is nothing else but their Relation to, and Connexion with the great End of all rational Intention and Action, which is true Happiness, or the common Good of Rationals. Truth and Goodness, therefore, moral Truth, and moral Good, are convertible Terms, and must signify the same Thing, or stand for the same Idea. An infinite number of Things may be physically or logically true, which are perfectly indifferent in Morality, and which have no Relation to, or Connexion with the Happiness, either of the Individual, or of the whole Species.

By moral Good and Evil, I here understand the Good or Evil of Sentiments, Tempers, Dispositions and Actions, as they are connected with, or repugnant to the true Good and Happiness of such or such Individuals, and the Society to which they belong, and are socially related and united. And from hence it is evident, that between moral Good and Evil, Truth and Falshood, or the Right and Wrong of Tempers, Dispositions and Actions, there is a Medium of *Indifference*. An Action, with respect to its moral Qualification, may be neither good nor evil, right or wrong, but purely indifferent: Or, if it be good or evil, right or wrong, *i. e.* morally true or false, it may be so in infinite Degrees, in Proportion to the Consequence or Importance of it, as connected with, or repugnant

pugnant to Happiness, whether it regards Individuals, or the whole related Society or Class of Beings. But with respect to physical or logical Truth, it is not so; every Proposition which is physically true, must be equally true, and there can be no Degrees of such Truth, nor any Medium betwixt Truth and Falshood: But every Truth is not of equal Importance, equally related to, or connected with the common Good of Rationals, or equally *moral*. And this Distinction between physical and moral Truth, I take to be absolutely necessary, to clear up some Difficulties of Consequence with which this Subject has been clogg'd, even by some of the greatest Philosophers and best Writers in this Way.

Moral Truth consists in practically considering and treating every Thing as it really is in Nature, and stands related to us, *i. e.* in considering and treating a Friend as a Friend, an Enemy as an Enemy, a good Man or a bad Man, a wise Man or Fool, as such as they really are. To consider and treat a Friend as an Enemy, a good Man as a bad, or a Lunatic as a Man in his right Senses, would be plainly false, and contradictory in Morality and Practice; and, therefore, in this Case, bare, abstract, physical, or logical Truth in Propositions, cannot be the moral Rule and Law of Words or Actions. Nay, and one may here go farther, and affirm, that

that the speaking or owning, or not denying a physical, abstract Truth, may be sometimes inconsistent with, and contradictory to the moral Truth or Rectitude of Actions.

To inform an Enemy, upon Demand, with what has been resolved on in the Cabinet or secret Council, for the necessary Defence of a Kingdom, nay, not to misinform and deceive him, as far as possible, either by Words or Actions, would be highly criminal and immoral, and such a one must be look'd upon and treated as the common Enemy and Betrayer of his Country. Thus to speak physical Truth to a mad Man, or Assassin in Pursuit of an innocent Person's Life, or not to deny the Truth, in such a Case, if necessary, must be immoral, and a Man by not deceiving or misinforming, in such or the like Cases, must make himself accessary to the Guilt of Murder. A thousand such Instances might be given, in which physical Truth, either by declaring or not denying it, would be infinitely and most apparently mischievous. And this, I think, without running into a long Discourse about it, is sufficient to shew the necessary Distinction between physical and moral Truth, or between the Truth of *Propositions* and the Truth of *Actions*.

§. 2. Men in Society ought to be considered either as in a State of *Peace* or *War*, as having their Interests and Happiness mutually connected, or inconsistent with, or repugnant

pugnant to each other. In a State of Peace and Amity, Men in Society owe one another all possible Beneficence, Protection and mutual Assistance: But in a State of War, the Necessity and Reason of Self-Defence, which is the primary and strongest Law, may take off all Obligations of Friendship, Beneficence, or mutual Aid and Protection; and in this Case, logical Truth is not to be kept to, or regarded against the moral Truth, Reason and Necessity of Things. A League of Peace, Friendship and mutual Protection, might as well be expected between Geese and Foxes, or between Sheep and Wolves. It could signify nothing here to distinguish between the unjust Aggressor, and the innocent Self-Defender; for when Matters are brought to this State of War, both Parties are upon the same Footing, till the strongest Arm or deepest Policy have decided the Dispute. And who will say, that tho' I have a Right to kill a Man in Self-Defence, yet I ought not to deceive him, either by Words or Actions, to save his own Life and mine too? But such Morals, surely, are barely speculative, and cannot consist with the present State and Circumstances of human Nature.

§. 3. It is not logical Truth, therefore, or the Truth of Propositions abstractedly considered, but the practical Importance of Truth in its Nature and Consequences, which is to be the Rule of Action and moral Conduct.

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Things, equally true, may be of infinitely different Importance with regard to us, or others with whom we are united in Society. If a Man should believe the Moon to be green Cheese, or his own Body to be made of Glass or Butter, it might be of no great Consequence to undeceive him, and, perhaps, much better to indulge his Error for the Time. But if he thinks that all Property ought to be common, that there is no God, no Obligation of Oaths, no Laws to be obey'd or submitted to, he ought to be driven out of any such Opinion, or hindered from acting upon it, either by Force or Deception; and the latter would be preferable, with regard to the Person himself, and every Body else, if that would take Effect. But to say, in such a Case, that tho' the Magistrate may hang a Man, and cut him off from Society, yet he ought not to tell him a Falshood of no ill Consequence, to betray or deceive him into a more important Truth, and make him a useful Member of Society, is a strange Sort of Regard to Truth, and could never be thought either good Policy or right Morality. And this may serve, farther, to shew the Difference between the abstract, physical Truth of Propositions, and the moral Truth or Rectitude of Actions.

From hence it appears, that the moral Truth or Rectitude of Actions lies in its Adequateness, Proportion or Congruity of the Act,

Act, and Object. To succour and protect a mortal Enemy, to a Man's own Destruction, or the Ruin of his Country; or to distress and ruin a Friend, to the Ruin of a Man's self or Country, would be as false and contradictory in Practice, as if a Man should affirm, in Words or Propositions, that Good is Evil, and Evil Good, Enmity Friendship, or Friendship Enmity, Truth Falshood, or Falshood Truth, or that there is no real Difference or Distinction between Good and Evil, Truth and Falshood.

Suppose a Highwayman meets you on the Road, and with a Pistol at your Breast demands your Money; he demands all, and you may misinform him at the Peril of your Life: If you knew yourself, in this Case, absolutely in his Power, no Doubt but you would tell him the strict, logical or physical Truth. But suppose you could divert his Purpose by misinforming him, and thereby save a Part of your own Right: Would this be immoral, or would the physical or logical Falshood be a moral one? I suppose not, and let the Man who thinks otherwise say so.

Again, you meet a Russian, a mad Man, or a foreign Army, landed for a general Destruction and Devastation. The mad Man or Russian demands which Way the innocent Person is gone, while he is armed with a full Purpose to destroy him, so far as you will let him

him know the strict, logical Truth. The foreign Army will destroy your Country, and put an End to your Laws and Religion, by your telling him the logical Truth, or not misinforming him, which he demands as a Right. I believe no Man of Sense or Virtue, in any of these Cases, would deliberate much with himself what he ought to do: He would never make physical or logical Truth the Rule of his moral Conduct; he would not think he acted wrong by saving his own Life, or the Laws and Religion, the Lives and Properties of his Country, by misinforming an Enemy, by all Means possible, either in Words or Actions.

The learned and excellent Author of the *Religion of Nature delineated*, could never design to contradict this plain, necessary and inevitable Truth in Nature and Reason, *i. e.* that logical, abstract or physical Truth in Propositions, cannot be unexceptionably the Rule of *moral Conduct*; or that there is no Difference between the Truth of *Propositions* and the Truth or Rectitude of *Actions*. And yet by not distinguishing clearly in this Case, he left himself obscure, and seem'd to throw a Weakness, Defect or Blemish upon a Work, which, otherwise, ought to have lived as long as the Sun and Moon endure. But when this is considered and allow'd for, I believe the Book just now mentioned, must survive all the

the Books of Religion and Christianity, which have been written for these seventeen hundred Years past.

§. 4. I have observed, that the Morality of a Person, or Agent, must suppose or include the moral Truth and Rectitude of the Temper or Disposition, as well as of the Action. And without carefully attending to this, there can be no right Judgment formed about the Morality or Immorality of *Persons*. A Man from mere Policy and Self-Interest, may put on the Disguise of moral Truth and Honesty against his natural and real Temper. He may gain a Reputation of Love to Mankind with no other Design, but to gratify and indulge some private Passion or Appetite of his own, whatever the Consequence may be to others. This is plainly the Mark of a Hypocrite, or publick Cheat; and no Man can prove himself to be otherwise, but by visibly sacrificing some private, valuable Interest of his own, to Truth, Rectitude, and publick Good.

§. 5. From hence it is evident, that no Action can be truly or compleatly virtuous, but what flows from the inward Principle and Spring of every good Action, which is that noble, divine Temper or Disposition, the commanding, prevailing Love of Truth, Order, and Rectitude. This intellectual, or moral Affection, the Love of *Truth*, in the Order of Nature, is designed as the Governess and

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Dirigent of all the inferior or more private and selfish Appetites and Affections. And this Rank and Order of Government it would always keep up and maintain, if cherished, supported, and indulged, as Reason directs, against the mere animal, selfish, and private Appetites, Affections, and Passions. But in this every Man is left to chuse his own Masters, and to resolve and determine with himself which of the two opposite Powers, Principles, or Motives of Action he will be governed and directed by; or whether he will act upon rational or sensitive, publick or private Motives. And in this Case, while a Man is *Compos Mentis*, and has any Use or Exercise of Reason at all, he can be under no Force or Compulsion, either from within, or without, from the Nature and Reason of the Thing to his Understanding, or from any extrinsic Force or Coertion. But this grand Point of Liberty and free Agency, I have so largely considered already, that there can be no Occasion to insist farther upon it here. But I chiefly now design to consider the several Degrees of moral Good and Evil, and how far Actions are laudable or blameable, rewardable or punishable. And this, I think, is a Matter which has never been thoroughly examined, or rightly understood.

§. 6. The Morality of an Action is to be judged of, and estimated from two Principles or Rules of Judgment: Either, 1. From the

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real Truth and Goodness of the Motive or Reason from which it proceeds, in the inward Intention of the Agent. Or, 2. From the visible Nature and Tendency of the external Action itself in its Consequences, as good or bad, beneficial or hurtful to others.

The first of these, the inward Reason, Motive, or Design of the Agent, cannot, with any Certainty, come within any human Cognizance or Jurisdiction. This is the proper Subject of a theocratic or divine Government or Jurisdiction. And this essential Difference of the Subject or Matter of Enquiry, is the only true and just Distinction between a Theocracy and human, political Government and Jurisdiction. If Men kept to this Distinction so obvious in itself, and so necessary in Nature and Reason, they could never invade the divine Prerogative, and never so manifestly and absurdly confound *Theocracy* and *human Policy*. A due Regard to this natural, necessary Distinction would soon put an End to all our senseless, extravagant Disputes about the positive *Laws of God*, and the theocratic Obligation of external, indifferent Actions, which have no intrinsic or extrinsic Goodness in them. The ill Consequence of such a Rule and Principle of Judgment would be only this, that the designing, ambitious Part of the Clergy, who are all theocratic Officers and Ambassadors from Heaven, would have less Opportunity to enrich

and aggrandize themselves, by blinding, dividing, and inflaming the rest of Mankind. A Consequence which, however the spiritual Rulers may, the Lay-Subjects ought never to dread.

But the Nature and Consequences of external Actions in Society, is what every Society may, and must judge, and take Cognizance of, for their own Safety. And here can be no Regard to the inward Motive or Conscience of the Action. Pleading Conscience for an evil Action, or an Action hurtful and mischievous in its Consequences to Society, is the great Aggravation of it. For by this a Man denies the Evil of the Action, and declares that he is ready, as he finds Opportunity, to do it again. And to urge an Obligation of Conscience, or the Command and Authority of God, for hurting and injuring Mankind in their Lives, Liberty, or civil Rights, makes such a Criminal almost insufferable in Society, and is a fair Warning to every Member of it, to guard against him, and look upon him as a common Enemy. A Man hereby declares, that he is not only wicked and mischievous, but that he is so upon Principle.

§. 7. Having thus settled the Boundaries between divine and human Government, or between Theocracy and civil Polity, we may now consider Actions, as they relate to both. It may be observ'd then, that an evil or  
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hurtful Action can never flow from a true or right Judgment. If the Action be evil in its Nature and Consequences, the Judgment must have been wrong, and the true Reason or Motive of Action mistaken. For a contrary Supposition would be supposing Truth itself to be hurtful in its Nature and Consequences, or that there is really no Difference or Distinction in Nature between Truth and Falshood. A good Intention, therefore, for an evil Action, must always suppose a wrong Judgment, and shew a manifest Contradiction and Repugnancy between the Action, and the End or Motive of it. Now as this wrong Judgment might be more or less vincible, the Action must be more or less culpable or criminal, with Regard to God and Conscience; but this cannot alter the Nature and Consequences of the Action in Society, or as it must be judged of at a human Tribunal.

It will be here absolutely necessary to distinguish between real and apparent Virtue, or between the Religion and external, political Virtue of an Action. A good Action proceeding from a good Principle or Motive of moral Truth and Rectitude in Temper and Disposition, is truly and compleatly moral. An evil Action, from a bad Principle or Motive, is perfectly immoral or vicious. But in the Case of a good Action, done from a bad Principle and Motive, or a bad Action



from a good Intention and Motive, the Morality is of a mix'd Kind, and the Goodness of the Action, in this Case, may so balance the Evil of the Motive, or the Goodness of the Motive the Evil of the Action, as to reduce the Action itself to a State of Indifference, so that the Agent shall be neither laudable nor blameable, rewardable or punishable in human Judgment. For in this the good Consequences of the Action in Society shall exempt a Man from Punishment, though it could not entitle him to any Thanks or Reward, if his bad Intention or evil Design in it were known. And the Reason of this is obvious, because Men who can only judge from Appearances, and the Nature and Consequences of Actions, with Regard to Society, must content themselves with such a Jurisdiction, and leave the inward, secret Springs and Motives of Action, and how far these might be vincible or invincible to God alone, who is the Searcher of Hearts, and the most wise and righteous Governor and Judge of the World.

But there is another Consideration, which must vastly affect and alter the inward, real Morality or Religion of Actions; which is the real Capacity or Ability of the Agent, and how far his Errors of Judgment, or Choice, might be vincible or invincible. For the bare, physical Power and Liberty of acting without Compulsion or Controul, is by no Means  
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the Rule or Measure of moral, rewardable Virtue, or culpable Vice. For where the bare, physical Power or Possibility of doing a Thing is the same, the Ability, Habit, Promptitude to, or Facility of doing the Thing, may be infinitely different. One Man may be very little, or not at all to blame, for not doing a Thing which another might have done with Ease, and may be highly criminal or punishable for not doing it, though the Thing was equally possible to both, with respect to bare, physical Power, abstracting from the different Capacities, Abilities, or Habitudes of the two Men. Thus, suppose two Men were put upon the same Trial for Life, in getting over a very deep and dangerous River, across a very narrow Bridge, where, by the least Slip or Failure, they must be inevitably drowned. One of these Men by Habit, Exercise, and acquired Ability, or by a better Make and Agility of his Limbs, might do this with the greatest Ease, or would have danced over upon a Rope: But though the Thing might be possible to the other, yet 'tis ten Thousand or a Million to one if he does not miscarry, and perish in the Attempt; and therefore, to require the same Thing of both these Probationers, under the same Penalty of Death or Destruction, would be highly unreasonable, tyrannical, and unjust. And thus in general the Culpability of not doing a Thing required or

commanded will be proportional to the Ease and Facility of doing, with Regard to the Capacity of the Agent; and on the other hand, the Praise and Rewardableness of doing what is required, is proportional to the Difficulty and Opposition, to be surmounted by the Probationer. And hence, where the Thing required and to be done is the same, the Failure of one Man may be very little blameable or punishable, and the Obedience of another deserve no great Praise or Reward.

This is the Rule of probational Virtue, or of moral Praise or Blame, Reward or Punishment, with respect to Creatures in a State of Trial, and where Virtue must cost them great Pains and Labour before they can obtain it, and be confirmed in it. But then it must be owned, that this Difficulty of Virtue argues the great Weakness and Imperfection of it, or a Defect of that rational Affection which is the Spring and Fountain of all Virtue, which is the *Love of Truth*, or that commanding, intellectual Pleasure and Delight which every truly virtuous Being must take in Order and moral Rectitude. Where this is not to be found in Temper and Disposition, it cannot be much expected in Practice, and while a Man's Virtue must cost him hard Labour and Struggle, it shews that he is only a Probationer for Virtue, but has not yet obtain'd it. Every Struggle and Opposition of this Kind evinces the Strength of Appetite

Appetite in him against Truth and Reason, and that he loves and delights in some inferior, private, animal Good more than Truth and Righteousness. To be virtuous with a Reluctance to Virtue, or without the Love of it, is impossible; and he who does not consider it as its own Reward, and the true Happiness of rational Nature, can never obtain or possess it from any other Consideration or View. The Hope of a *Mahometan* Paradise, or the Fear of a *Jewish* Hell, may restrain the inward Emotions of Lust and Appetite; but this can never alter the Temper and Disposition of Mind, or create that Love of Truth and Virtue from which every good Action flows. Such Candidates for positive Rewards, however they may flatter themselves, will never obtain the End which they thus idly and absurdly aim at. While they propose to themselves a Happiness which has no natural Connexion with Virtue, and which does not flow from it in proportional Degrees, they may justly incur the Punishment which they hoped to have avoided. But this I am sure of, that the Error here is very gross, and its present Consequences greatly mischievous, whatever may happen hereafter.

§. 8. It deserves here a particular Enquiry, how it should come about, that Mankind in general should make no better Use of their Understandings, especially in a Matter of the last Consequence, and nearest Concern  
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to them, such as the Nature of *true Happiness*, and the Means of obtaining it. That Men are not so much divided about any Thing else, even the most common Affairs of Life, is a Matter of Fact too plain to be deny'd. And as this is the greatest Evil, the Causes and Cure of it are the more necessary to be thought on, examined, and enquired into.

With Regard to the natural Knowledge of Arts and Sciences, whether mathematical or experimental, the common Exigencies and Requirements of Life render the Bulk of Mankind uncapable of it. They have neither the Leisure, nor the necessary Helps and Advantages to acquire such Knowledge. The many Calls and Importunities of the Animal Kind take up the greatest Part of their Time, Thoughts, and Labour, so that the more abstract Speculations, and experimental Disquisitions of Philosophy are placed by Providence quite out of their Reach, and beyond their Sphere of Action. And hence it is, that Men are never blamed for any Ignorance or wrong Judgment in such Matters. For as these Things are providentially placed out of their Sphere, they can be under no Obligation of attending to them. But every Man has a Happiness to seek, and a main End to secure, which must be infinitely preferable to any Concerns of Life. And yet here it is we find, that Mankind in general have been most lost and bewildered, as if God and Providence

dence had placed their own Happiness, and the Way to it, more out of their Power than any Thing else. How this should happen, might seem unaccountable at first Sight, and yet it can be no great Mystery to any Man tolerably acquainted with the World and human Nature; and the principal, or fundamental Causes of it, I take to be such as these.

1. The prevailing Strength and Bias of the private, corrupt, animal Affections and Desires. Reason is silenced and borne down by brutal Appetite and Passion. They resolve to gratify their sensual Appetites and Desires, and will therefore never taste or try the superior Pleasures and Enjoyments of Reason and Virtue. But such Men as these having declared open War against their own Reason and Conscience, and being resolved, at all Risks, to maintain the Combat, must be self-condemned, and cannot plead Ignorance, or Error of Judgment in the Case.

Abstract, mathematical, or physical Truth, as has been observed, may be above the Reach of the Bulk and Community of Mankind. But *moral Truth*, Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, the doing as we would be done by, and acting towards all Men as they really are, and stand related in Society; these Things are as evident to the Understanding, as Light and Colours are to the Eye, and may be called the intellectual, moral Sense. Here needs no deep Learning, or Trouble and Expence of Educa-

Education, but the same Truths are as evident, and as much seen and felt by the Learned and Unlearned, the Gentleman and the Ploughman, the savage or wild *Indian*, as by the best-instructed Philosopher. The divine Perfections shine through all Nature, and the Goodness and Bounty of the Creator to all his Creatures impress the Obligation of imitating this wisest and best of Beings upon every Man's Heart and Conscience.

2. Another fundamental Cause of moral Error, is the Prejudice and Prepossession of a wrong Education. False Principles and absurd Notions of God and Religion, wrought early into the tender, unexperienced Mind, and there radicated and confirmed from Time to Time, from Youth to riper Age, by Parents, Teachers, our most intimate Friends and Acquaintance, and such as we have the best Opinion of, and confide most in; such Causes, I say, as these, make such strong Impressions, that the grossest Errors thus rivetted and fixed are, with the greatest Difficulty, ever conquered or cleared off. In this Case Men are armed against all Conviction, and the most gross and palpable Errors are almost invincible. These well-grounded Believers will read but one Sort of Books, and converse with but one Sort of Men, and all others they look upon as dangerous Intruders and Invaders of that sacred Depositum of Error which they are to receive as Truth, and

and never to examine. The Masters and Conductors of their Education have cantoned out for them a little *Goshen* in the intellectual World, where they imagine Truth shines, and Day-light blesses them; but the rest of the vast Expanse they give up to eternal Night and Darkness, and avoid coming near. Nay they shut their Eyes, struggle against Conviction, and are frightened at the very Appearances of Truth, if it seems to shine out of their own Province, or to discover any of the Absurdities and Deformities of their own Party. They dare not enquire farther, or hearken to any Reasons which would disturb them in the quiet, peaceable Possession of their divine Right of taking all upon Trust, and believing without Evidence.

How far Men may be excusable in their moral and religious Errors, when this Partiality, Prejudice, and blind Zeal have been fix'd upon them in their early Youth, and confirmed by all the Force of Education and Example, is not for me to determine: But it looks as if the Generality of Mankind were scarce free Agents in this Case, as to what Religion they shall be of, or what Party must be intitled to their Hearts and Hands. Whether a Man shall be a *Jew*, *Mahometan*, or *Christian*, a *Papist* or *Protestant*, a *Lutheran* or *Calvinist*, &c. seems but little more in his Choice, than his Birth, Parentage, and Education; Circumcision or Baptism fixes his Religion



Religion in his Infancy, and his *Church* is as natural and native to him as his *Country*. Should a Man make Religion a Matter of Choice and free Enquiry, he must be in great Danger of Apostasy from his Party, and therefore, all religious or Church-Parties take the most effectual Care possible to keep their Profelytes from all farther Enquiries or Reasonings about a Religion which they have taken upon Trust, and which they are to keep to, against all the Arguments and Attacks of Opposers, as the great and sure Trial of their Faith and Fortitude.

For my own Part, I am very much inclined to think, that the true Reason why most Men of this Sort of Education do not think clearer, and argue better about Religion, is because they cannot. They may have very good Understandings, reason right, and draw just Consequences in other Matters; but this is a Subject which they had never been taught to reason upon, and therefore, their Understanding or reasoning Faculty in this Case is grown stiff, inflexible, and inert, for want of Use and Exercise. Certain Moles and Excrescences have been suffered to grow up and stick to this Part of the Mind, which leave it without Sense or Motion, like a withered or paralytic Limb.

We see in all other Cases, that Men are more or less rational in proportion to their Experience, Observation, and Use of Reason  
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upon such and such Subjects. A Country Farmer would make but an indifferent Figure at the Bar, and a Lord Chief Justice would be equally laugh'd at in the Management of a Farm; for tho' their Understandings might be both good, and naturally improvable, yet they could reason right, and draw just Consequences no farther than their Experience, Observation, and Use had carried them. And from hence it is, that Men generally reason worst, or, perhaps, not at all, but talk down-right Nonsense about Religion, how intelligent and rational soever they be in other Matters. They take all other Sorts of Knowledge in the natural Way, and improve it by Observation, Experience, and Use; but their Religion drops down to them from Heaven, and they worship and revere the Idols of their own Church, as the *Ephesians*, and the rest of *Asia*, did their great Goddess *Diana*. Let their Religion be rational or not rational, it matters not; but if you deny it to have come to them immediately from Heaven, you are an Atheist and Infidel, and ought to be struck out of the Book of Life, where the Faithful are inrolled.

3. This leads one to consider another principal Cause of such moral Error, which is the Darknes and Confusion that has been introduced into Mens Thoughts and Reasoning upon moral Subjects, by not distinguishing clearly between *Religion* and *Church-*

*ism.* By Churchism here, I mean the various Methods, Modes, and Forms of external Worship, which from Time to Time have happened to take Place in the several Parts of Christendom. Religion is a fix'd, unalterable Thing, and is always and every where the same, as much as God and human Nature are the same: But Churchism is infinitely variable by human Authority, Custom, common Consent, and a thousand other different Occasions and Incidents, which can be reduced to no certain Rule or Standard at all.

Religion, as has been observed and proved, consists in the moral Truth and Rectitude of Sentiments, Dispositions, and Actions, as they are related to, and connected with the great End of all intelligent Agency, *true Happiness*. This moral Character is the true Happiness and Rectitude of intelligent Beings, the Perfection of rational Nature, and the Image of the Deity upon all created, dependent Minds. This, therefore, is the true and only Test of *Religion*, and all other Pretensions to it can be nothing but Imposture or Enthusiasm. This is a Characteristic level to every Man's Understanding, and which must force itself upon every sober, considerate Man's Conscience. But 'tis astonishing to observe how far Mankind have been carried off from this Test and Rule of *Truth*, and upon what Grounds they have been taught to place *Religion*. *Religion*, by the  
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Artifice of some, and the Ignorance of others, or by Imposture working upon Enthusiasm and Superstition, has been made the most disputable, doubtful, unintelligible Thing in the World. Every Church, as the Image of Religion dropt down from Heaven, has been made the Standard of Truth, and the only Boundary and Inclosure of divine Favour; and the devoted Members of these spiritual Societies have been alway fighting the Battles of the Lord, to the Destruction of Mankind. Every Man is born a Member of some such spiritual Faction or other, into which he is soon baptized before he knows, or is capable of distinguishing between Right and Wrong. But the first Church which happens to get Possession of a Man, and who insists him without his Knowledge or Consent, has a Right to him for ever afterwards; for this Church he is to spend, and be spent; he is to defend it by Argument or Arms, to part with every Thing else, and to sacrifice his Life and Fortune to it upon Occasion. And this is what they call Soundness of Faith, and Steadiness in Religion.

But instead of the usual Question, what *Religion* a Man is of? it would be more proper and intelligible to ask, what *Church* he belongs to? For these two Questions have no Relation to, or Dependence upon each other, since a Man may be of any Church in the World, attend it constantly, and be very



warm and zealous for it, without the least Grain of Religion either in Temper or Practice. And on the other hand, he may be truly religious, and lead a sober, righteous, and godly Life, without being of any spiritual Church Faction.

But the political Heads and Leaders of these spiritual Monopolies have always assumed to themselves the holy Name of the *Spirituality*, in Contradistinction to the *Temporality*, or profane Laity. They have pretended to a spiritual Authority and Jurisdiction over Conscience; to be the divinely authorized Interpreters of Scripture, Religion, and the Will of God for our Salvation, and authoritatively to apply the Sanctions of eternal Life and Death to their infinitely different and contradictory Schemes and Systems of Religion.

This is all evident and undeniable in Fact, and one may venture to pronounce it one of the chief Causes of moral Error, Ignorance, Bigotry, and Enthusiasm. Most Men have been brought up in this Way from their earliest Youth, confirmed in it by all the Power and Prejudice of Education, and taught out of their Reason for a Religion above it, under the specious Name of supernatural and super-rational Revelation. They are put under the Conduct of such Guidance and Tuition before they are capable of thinking and judging for themselves, and thereby made un-

capable of it for ever afterwards. Religion, I mean *Churchism*, is born with them; they have their Faith by Inheritance, and Reason must give Way to it.

4. This makes Way for another principal Cause and Ground of moral Error, which has been confounding *Theocracy*, or the Authority of God over Conscience, with an external, *human Jurisdiction*. From the first Records of History, to this Day, since Religion became a Matter of civil Polity, we find, that every *Church* or *spiritual Faction* has set itself up as a *Theocracy*. This Policy, so far as I can trace it, began first in *Egypt*, from whence the *Israelites*, with *Moses* at their Head, brought it; and their Posterity the *Jews* afterwards, by an unhappy Conversion, propagated it through all Christendom. And these being the first great Majority of Converts, established, and gave their Sanction to a Sort of Christianity, which was nothing but mystical, or allegorical *Judaism*.

But not to insist upon this, it may be more to the Purpose to settle the clear, distinct Notion and Difference between a *Theocracy* and civil Polity, or between divine and human Government. And here 'tis evident, that the Heart and Conscience, the inward Principles and Motives of Mens Actions, can be subject to the Cognizance and Jurisdiction of God alone. In this Respect every Man is under a *Theocracy*, and cannot be subject to any human Inspection or Authority.

But all external Actions, in their Nature and Consequences, or all outward Practice, as it affects Society, is the proper Subject of civil Polity, or human Government. And in this Case the Conscience, or inward Principle and Motive of Action, as it lies beyond all human Cognizance, cannot be the Subject or Matter of human Authority and Jurisdiction. Every Society has a natural Right to guard and defend itself, as much as possible, against Force or Frauds, Policy or Violence; and no Plea of Conscience can set aside this. Whether a Man injures another, or hurts the Society, with a good or evil Conscience, is nothing to the Purpose, and cannot come into the Question in any Matter of human Judicature; and this is, I think, an easy, natural, and clear Distinction between Theocracy and civil Polity, or between divine and human Government.

Had this necessary, natural Distinction been kept to, Men could never have confounded Religion and Politicks; they could never have subjected Conscience to human Jurisdiction, or made bare, external Actions the Matter of Theocracy; but a political Theocracy, and a theocratic Policy, would have been thought equally absurd and ridiculous.

Yet we find every *Church*, or at least their spiritual Guides, who can take Cognizance only of outward Actions abstracted from all Conscience, inward Motive, or Principle of Action,

Action, have always set themselves up as a Theocracy, and applied the Sanctions of eternal Life and Death to their own Laws, *i. e.* to their own Interests and political Ends. And they would fain persuade us, that they have a divine Authority for all this, and that God once instituted such a State of Things himself. They own, indeed, that God thought better of it afterwards, and dissolved that political Theocracy again, as not fit for that, or any other civil Society in the World. And yet, it seems, a Constitution of the same Kind, or a Religion consisting in mere, outward, indifferent, or unprofitable Actions, is, and must be, the true State and Constitution of every *Church* to this Day. But 'tis very difficult to talk with such Men, without being thought profane; for to expose their own Ignorance, Prejudice, or Selfishness, is the greatest Profanation in the World.

5. Nothing has been a greater Source of moral Error, or contributed more to the grossest Mistakes about *Religion*, than the Distinction between the *Spirituality* and *Temporality*, or the Clergy and Laity, as if one had any proper Authority or Jurisdiction over the Judgments and Consciences of the other. How high this Claim of spiritual Authority and Jurisdiction may be carried, I shall not pretend to say; perhaps St. *Peter* himself, the great Patron of the *Roman Church*, might be the first Claimant of this Kind; but how-



ever that be, 'tis very well known, that the Spirituality now are neither infallible Law-givers themselves, nor infallible Interpreters of the most ancient Laws; and that they are divinely authorized to do this, right or wrong, however it may be said with a good Assurance, can never be said with any Grace. Such an Assertion would be enough to put a Bishop to the Blush, and much more to make a Parish-Priest look like a Coxcomb.

But as absurd and perfectly ridiculous as such a Claim may seem, it is wonderful to consider how far the weak and unthinking Part of Mankind have been deluded, and led away with it. They have been taught to look upon Religion as a Matter quite above them, and out of their Sphere. They are to take Truths of this Kind from the Learned in that Way, and not pretend to judge for themselves, or trust their own Understandings in a Matter which God has placed so much out of their Reach: He has set Men over them, Men of undoubted Learning and Integrity, who are to tell them what they are to believe, and do, to obtain eternal Life, It would be very absurd and preposterous for rude, illiterate Men, who know nothing of Arts and Sciences, to take upon them to judge and determine in the Mathematicks, or in the several Parts and Branches of natural and experimental Philosophy, and not to be satisfied and determined by the Learned and Skilful

Skilful in those Sciences, who have made such Enquiries their proper Study and Business, and who can have no Interest to deceive them. This, how gross and palpable soever the Deception may be, goes a great Way with Men who would willingly save themselves the Trouble of examining and judging for themselves, and who would have as little to do as possible with Matters of Religion. But they ought surely to consider how much the Learned in this Way are divided, and that, which ever Set or opposite Class of them they are guided and determined by, they will be sure to have the Opinion of all the rest against them. Let them suppose the learned Professors of Arithmetic, Algebra, Astronomy, experimental Philosophy, &c. to be alike divided among themselves, and then think what Trust or Confidence they could place in such learned Triflers.

6. But there is still a deeper and more melancholy Cause of moral Error and Deception: *Si populus vult decipi, decipiatur*. None are deceiv'd in this Way, but such as hate the Truth, shun the Light, and dread to be better informed. Truth is their avow'd, implacable Enemy, that would disturb their Repose in the Gratification of their Lusts; and therefore, they abhor and fly from it as a Fiend that torments them before the Time, and haunts them with the Stings, Remorses, and guilty Forebodings of evil Doing.

All the Appetites and Passions rise up armed against it as a domestick Incendiary, an insolent Controller of private Affairs, and a most insufferable Invader of the Rights and Privileges of human Nature. What——would you impose and force Truth upon us to plead an Authority superior to the natural, hereditary Right, and uninterrupted Succession of Appetite and Passion? This is raising an intestine War in the Soul, shaking the whole Empire of Lust, and dethroning the grand Usurper that rules despotically over the subject, obedient Passions, and throwing the carnal Mind into all the Pangs and Agonies of Death. Truth is this Incendiary that would break a Man's Peace, and disturb his Repose in the Gratification of corrupt, distempered Appetite, and advance Reason to its natural Sovereignty and Dominion in the Soul. Truth would open a Man's Eyes, restore him to his right Senses, and bring him to exchange the Pleasures of a Fool, a Beast, or a Madman, for the infinitely greater Delights and Consolations of sober Reason. Truth, therefore, moral Truth, must be armed against, and all the Possé and Outrage of the blind Appetites and Passions raised to keep out such an Enemy, and maintain Peace within.

Such is the Struggle and Conflict which a Man must have with himself, while he is in the Power of such an Enemy and Usurper, and has not Courage or Resolution enough to assert

assert the natural Right and just Dominion of his superior Reason. But in this every Man must give himself up as a voluntary, willing Slave, and can plead no Force, Compulsion, or Necessity in the Case. But in such a Case, where Truth and Reason are set aside, and absolutely resolved against, something or other must be done to keep Peace within, for no Man could bear to be at eternal War and irreconcilable Enmity with himself.

Now here the first and most obvious Remedy and Expedient is this, a firm, absolute Resolution never to think or reason at all about such Matters; but as often as any such Thought returns, or whenever Reason intrudes and attempts to be heard, to stifle and suppress the Motion upon the first Overture. And here a Man may immediately fly into Company, gratify the first craving Appetite with Wine, Women, Plays, Operas, Mirth, and Jollity, such as first offers, or is suggested to him. Retirement, Consideration, and sober Reflexion, in this Case, would be dangerous, and might chance to recover his Senses, and deprive him of the reasonable Necessity of doing as he thinks fit, or of acting blindly, and without thinking.

This Expedient, however, is only the Wisdom of the Swine, and not of the Serpent. But there is another more plausible Expedient, which I am more particularly concerned to speak to now. The most open and scandalous



lous Sensualities and Excesses of Appetite are never approved of, or indulged, by the soberest Sort of Sinners, where Religion must be the Veil. They hate Whoring, Drinking, Swearing, Gaming, and the other Properties and Attributes of *Belial*; but Mammon is their God, and the Worship of this Deity may consist with the Face and Appearance of Religion. But in this Case, whatever they may imagine, they scarce ever deceive the World, but the main Art is how to deceive themselves. And here the best Expedient has been always found to substitute something for Religion, which is not the Thing itself, or confounding the outward Appearances with the internal Character and Reality of it: Or, which is the same Thing, placing Religion in something or other besides the moral Truth and Rectitude of Temper, Disposition, and Action. And here nothing has served the Turn so well, or could have been better thought of, than a speculative or historical *Faith*, and the several Modes, Rites, and Ceremonies of external, bodily Worship, abstracted from the Religion of the Thing, *i. e.* the Temper, Disposition, or moral Principle from which it flows.

A dead, inoperative *Faith*, in incomprehensible Mysteries, and the bare, external Modes and Forms of *Churchism*, which have no intrinsic Goodness or Virtue in them, have long pass'd for *Religion*; and a warm, uncharitable

ritable Zeal for these is to be *religiously devout*. Now either of these is an easy Commutation for the Pain and Trouble of Mortification, Self-Denial, and the real, internal Character of *Virtue* or *true Religion*. All *Faith*, and all *Ceremony*, is easier and better dispensed with than the Mortification of one Lust, or the Conquest over any one inordinate Appetite. Men under the Power and Dominion of their Lusts and Appetites will part with any Thing else, or do any Thing to be left in the quiet Possession of these. They will offer *thousands of Rams, or ten thousand Rivers of Oil*; give *their First-born for their Transgression*, or *the Fruit of their Body for the Sin of their Soul*, as the divine Prophet elegantly expresses it. But *to do Justice, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with God*, is a Demand too high, and a Law too severe for such Devotionists. They are for any *Religion* exclusive of *Virtue*, or where *Virtue* is not the principal Part of it; but to make *Virtue* or moral Truth and Rectitude the Whole of Religion, is to dash all their Hopes, to destroy their Faith, and to make their Religion nothing but a Name, and a Shadow. Besides, it deprives of the Pleasure of Enthusiasm, and the Privilege of sending other Men to the Devil, for not thinking as they do.

This is the Consequence of substituting *Churchism* for *Religion*, or Mysteries of Faith, and Glare of Ceremony, for a sober, righteous,

teous, and godly Life, from the Love of Truth, Virtue, and moral Rectitude. It builds a Hope upon the Sand, and makes Heaven and Happiness but a Castle in the Air. It makes Religion nothing but Superstition and Enthusiasm, disposes Men to deceive themselves, and lays them open to all the Cheat and Imposture in the World. It darkens their Understandings, inflames their Passions, and secures them in the imaginary Favour of God, by exposing themselves to the Indignation or Contempt, the Odium or Ridicule of the most intelligent Part of Mankind.

This has made Way for designing Priests and Politicians to trump whatever they please upon the credulous, believing Vulgar, for favouring Faith and true Religion. The prevailing Faith and Practice, as settled by Authority, or otherwise agreed upon, is the *true Religion*, the Sum and Substance of Christianity, the only Way to Salvation, and the Faith once delivered to the Saints. And from hence such Wars and Fightings, Envy and Hatred, and every evil Word and Work have arisen from the Churches, that if they were not all of divine Original, and had not been all sent down from Heaven, one might have thought it the greatest Plague to Mankind, and the worst Phial of Wrath that ever had been poured out upon the Earth.

7. But

7. But the grossest Corruption of human Reason, the deepest Corruption of Religion, and what ought to hold the first Place among the Causes of moral Error, is the Notion of an imputed, sacrificial Righteousness, or Justification by Proxy and Intercession, as of more Avail and Consequence than any personal, moral Character. No Doctrine could ever have been contrived, or thought of, more favourable to Mens Lusts and carnal Desires, or more conducive and necessary to promote and strengthen the Power and Interest of those, whose Business and Office it is to dispense such Grace. What would not a Man give for a Surety, who would take all his Debts upon him, and discharge him in Law, when he could not otherwise have paid one Farthing, but must have been condemn'd to perpetual Imprisonment? And who, under such Protection, would care what Debts he contracted, what Offences he committed, or what Demands the Law in Reason and Justice might have upon him? Especially if he might contract the same Debt, or commit the same Offence a hundred Times, or every Day, as long as he has any Opportunity or Ability for it, and yet be fully discharged and acquitted, at last, by the same Suretiship, and under the same Security. I would appeal to the common Sense of Mankind, whether such a Doctrine, such an Expectation and Security as this, must



must not effectually nullify, destroy, and set aside all Obligation of Law and personal Obedience.

To talk of the Necessity of *Repentance* or Reformation of Life, as the Condition of such Pardon, would be a mere Jest, since every Man, in this Way or Scheme of Churchism (for I would not profane the Word Religion) is to repent daily of all his Sins, known and unknown, in order to a daily, renewed Pardon: And after a Thousand such Pardons regularly taken out, and sacramentally sealed, and as often forfeited; yet still the Man is intitled to a fresh Pardon upon the same *true Repentance*, to the last Moments of his Life. But daily, renewed Pardons, for the same Debts contracted, or the same Offences repeated and continued in, would sound very odd any where out of Divinity. The moral Truth here is certainly incomprehensible, and the Mystery of Faith ought to be farther enquired into.

A Prince may forgive a Traitor or Rebel, or a whole Society of such, upon their Vows, Promises, or any reasonable Security given, never to bear Arms against him more, but to behave themselves as peaceable, loyal Subjects for the Time to come. And thus a Man would forgive a Debt, or any Obligation in Law, upon any probable Security given against the Abuse of such Clemency, or the same Affronts and Provocations for the future.

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But if the same Game or Farce should be play'd over and over, and the same Clemency and Indulgence expected, I believe no wise Governor, or merciful Creditor, would take any future, reiterated Vows and Promises for Satisfaction, nor would they again accept the same Security, or Suretiship.

The Application of this to the positive *Jewish* Scheme of Christianity, is easy enough, and needs but little farther Illustration. This Class of *Christians*, I almost scorn to give them the *Name*, have gone so much upon Trust, till they have greatly endangered, and in a Manner forfeited the Credit of their Surety.

Such a Scheme of *Cburchism*, under the Notion of *Religion*, would be astonishing, if no farther Account could be given of it. But the true Solution of this Difficulty is not so much a Mystery of *Faith*, as a Matter of *Experience*. Some Expedient or other was to be found out to supply the Want of Virtue and moral Rectitude of Temper, Disposition, and Action, and to calm Reason, or satisfy Conscience in the Gratification of any darling Lust, or prevailing, biasing Appetite. And nothing could better serve this Purpose, than an imputed Righteousness, redundant Merit, or transferable Credit. By this Means any Sinner might be a Saint, and the Obedience of another might pass for a Man's own. A very happy Discovery this, and which might

might intitle the Inventors of it to an infinite Reward, if they could prove the Truth and Certainty of it, by a sufficient Number of successful Experiments. But the Want of this makes it doubtful, whether the Discovery did not come from the Devil, for the Destruction of Mankind. I take it, however, to be a Piece of Priestcraft and ecclesiastical Tyranny, and which, as the principal Cause of moral Error in Christendom, I shall now examine.

8. Mankind could never have been thus deluded, befooled, and ruined in their nearest Interest, or spiritual Capacity, but by some extraordinary Cause of such Deception. And here a very little Reflexion will be sufficient to convince any Man, that our spiritual Guides, under the Notion and Pretence of divine Authority and Commission, have led the World into this fatal Error. The strong Propensity of Mankind to the irregular and irrational Gratifications of the animal Appetites, and private, selfish Desires, has given Occasion to spiritual Impostors to impose upon them, to compromise Matters between God and them, and to cheat the Devil in the Gratification of their Lusts.

There is no Man tolerably acquainted with History, and especially the Christian ecclesiastical History, but must know, that the Christian World, for above sixteen hundred Years past, have given up their Faith and

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Consciences to a Set of Men who, as they suppose, have derived an Authority and Commission from Christ, to declare, expound, and interpret his Laws, and the Obligations thence arising. These Laws of Faith and Religion are not of any private Interpretation, or to be interpreted by any private Judgment, but must be received and submitted to upon the Judgment and Decision of the publick, authorized Ministers of Religion, who, as Ambassadors from Christ, have full Power and Authority to declare his Will, and to fix and ascertain the Sense of any Laws, Constitutions, or Ordinances, which he might have left doubtful. This is, as I take it, ministerial, authoritative Christianity. This is the true Catholick Scheme of Faith, which none can reject or dispute but Deists, Hereticks, and Infidels.

But such a Claim of divine Authority and Commission, which was to set aside all Right of private Judgment and Reason, and to subject the Faith and Consciences, and consequently the temporal Interests and Properties of Mankind to a particular Order, who call themselves the *Spirituality*; such a Claim, I say, could never have been received and submitted to, without some valuable Considerations. Good, sound, orthodox, savable Christians, always gave up their Understanding, Faith, and Consciences, to their spiritual Guides, and authorized Rulers; but surely  
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this was not for nothing, for hereby they were exempted from all the Pain and Trouble of examining and judging for themselves, and at the same Time secured from all their guilty Fears, and evil Foreboding and Remorses of Conscience in any Defect of internal, real Virtue, moral Truth, or Rectitude, provided they yielded a due external Conformity to the settled Faith, Worship, and Ceremonies of the true Church of Christ, whose Ministers and Ambassadors they were to receive, and own, as Christ himself. This has been always the Contract, Bargain, and Compromise between Priests and People; and as soon as a Man comes to break it, or question the Reason and Right of the Obligation, he is immediately a Deist, Infidel, and downright Atheist. By this Means the different Interests and Views of the Spirituality and Temporality are united, and made perfectly consistent; one secure to themselves Wealth and Power by Authority from Christ, and the other obtain all the Advantages and Rewards of Religion without Virtue; they are of the *true Church*, and then no Matter whether any Thing else be true; their Poverty is their Riches, while they are only emptying their Purses to fill their Hearts with the Peace and Joy of believing; their Faith is Holiness, and their Churchism Religion.

It will be said, that I am here only raving at the Popish Priests, and Church of *Rome*,  
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and maliciously wounding the Protestant Clergy through their Sides; but I should willingly bear such an Imputation, and take all the Consequences of it, if the Charge could be proved. If the Protestant Clergy have done nothing to confound *Churchism* with *Religion*, or to quiet and compose Mens Consciences after all the full Enjoyments of their Lusts, let me pass for an Incendiary and false Accuser of the Brethren. And this I shall gladly, and without Reluctance submit to, as soon as any one of them can prove it not true of the Majority, by which the Body, or Society, must be always denominated.

I think, the Necessity of an imputed Righteousness, or redundant Merit, in order to Salvation, and all divine Favour, and the utter Insufficiency of all personal Obedience, even the most perfect that we are capable of, without such an Imputation, is the common Doctrine of both Popish and Protestant Divines. The necessary Consequence of which is, that under the present Circumstances of Mankind, God has placed every Man's Happiness out of his own Power, and left it as a Matter of mere, arbitrary Will and Pleasure, whether he would reward the Good, and punish the Bad, or not. For this Faith of imputed Righteousness, or redundant, transferable Merit, can have no Connexion with the moral Character, or the real, internal State, Temper, and Disposition of the Mind. But how

it has come about, that *Religion* has been confounded with *Churchism*, Superstition with Morality, or speculative Faith and Ceremony with spiritual Obedience, may deserve a farther Enquiry.

§. 9. A hierarchical State, or temporal Constitution, with their settled Creeds, Articles, Tests of Conscience and inward Judgment, and external Ceremonies and Modes of *bodily Worship*, under the Direction of their spiritual Guides and Rulers, is what I call a *Church*. Every such Church, however formed or constituted, is the Hierarchy or Theocracy of that *spiritual State*. They have derived all their Power and Authority from Christ, independent of all civil Power and Authority whatever. Kings and Princes are their Subjects, and all the Laws and Sanctions of eternal Life and Death are under their Cognizance and Jurisdiction. They will not, perhaps, plainly and directly say, that the internal, moral Character or Purity of Heart is unnecessary, or that God does not require it; but yet all this can be of no Avail to Salvation, or Acceptance with God, without an external Conformity and Obedience to their Church Laws and spiritual Constitutions, as contain'd in their Articles of Faith, and approved Rites and Forms of Worship; without this the perfect Obedience, Righteousness, and redundant Merit of Christ can never be imputed even to the purest and most upright Heart. And

without such Imputation duly and sacramentally signed and sealed by the proper Ministers of Salvation, a Man with all the moral Truth and Rectitude that human Nature is capable of, might be damned, and for ever deprived of all divine Favour.

This is *Churchism*; and from what has been already offered and considered, any one may easily see how it came to be substituted for *Religion*. 'Tis the shortest and easiest Way to Heaven, and a good Exchange for the Pain and Trouble of Mortification, Self-Denial, and the Crucifixion of a Man's beloved Appetites and Idol Lusts. From hence it is, that the devout Professors of Churchism defend their Religion in the same Manner, and by the same Weapons they would their Lust, or a Bully his Mistress. If they had nothing but their Religion to restrain them, they would draw and stab a Man who should question their being in the right Way of Salvation, though they have no moral Right or Pretence to it; their *Faith* is their *Virtue*, and they need not enquire what true *Religion* is, while they are of the true *Church*.

Since Priests have been recognized as Ambassadors from Heaven, or the only true, authorized Ministers and Dispensers of divine Favour, and their Churches considered as the *broad Way*, or high Road to Salvation; the grand Enquiry has been, which is the *true Church*. But this, like the Philosopher's Stone,



after all the Expence of Lives and Fortunes, remains still a Secret, and no Man could ever form a right Notion of this Image of *Diana*. The *true Church* is still the great Desideratum in this Way of Superstition.

The popish Hierarchy have always pleaded Prescription, and an uninterrupted Succession of living, infallible Judges, from St. *Peter*. The protestant Hierarchy, against such an exorbitant Claim, plead Scripture, as an infallible Rule for all their Doctrines and Modes of Worship. They own their Faith not to be infallible, though their Rule is, or which is the same Thing in Effect, they own, that they know nothing of their infallible Rule, and cannot apply it. They are fallible in walking by an infallible *Rule*, and as much at a Loss for Truth, as if they had no Rule at all; and yet all their Church Schemes and Constitutions are Hierarchies and Theocracies as much as Popery itself. The papal Hierarchy is a very consistent Scheme of Falshood, and if you grant their first Principle, the *Infallibility of their Church*, the rest is all *Demonstration*. Their Hierarchy is but one, and the Infallibility of the Church is their Principle or Medium of *Unity*; but every protestant, independent *Church* is a *Hierarchy*, without any Principle or Medium of *Unity* at all. They all go by the same infallible Rule, and have the same Stamp of *divine Authority*; but  
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any Rule or Criterion of *Truth*, or *common Sense*, is still wanting.

This has driven most learned Protestants into another Rule or Measure of Action, which is not *Truth*, but *Sincerity*. Every Man may be saved in his own Way, whether it is the right or wrong Way to Salvation, provided he is but *sincere* in it. But if *Truth* be such a mysterious, incomprehensible Thing, in Matters of Conscience and eternal Salvation, how comes *Sincerity* to be better known or judged of? Might not any Criminal, of any Kind, plead Sincerity, and his having made the best Examination he could, and acted up to his best Light? Or would it be possible to convict or punish the most sanguine Persecutor, or outrageous Enemy to Mankind, upon this Principle of Sincerity against Truth and Reason? There is certainly in human Judgment a Rule of *Truth*, but none but God can judge of a Man's SINCERITY. This has ever proved an unsurmountable Difficulty with the hierarchical Divines, or theocratic Rulers, who have been always sure to confound moral Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong, with them; any Man who complies with their theocratic Government, or Scheme of Churchism, is sincerely in the right; but if he disputes this, or cannot come into it, he is wickedly and insincerely in the wrong; which is a Supposition that must confound and destroy all Difference and Dis-

distinction between Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong, Sincerity and Insincerity. An evident Proof, that these Men make not *Truth*, but *Interest*, their Rule; and that all their Outeries of Falshood, Infidelity, Deism, Atheism, &c. can signify nothing, as it comes from them.

*Sincerity* is *moral Truth*, and no Man can be sincere in the Practice of *Immorality*. A sincere Impostor, Betrayer of Trust, cruel, unmerciful Tyrant, Oppressor, or Violator of natural Honour, Truth and Justice, would sound very odd. But a Man may be very sincerely ignorant of any Thing which he is not obliged to know, and especially of what is not true, and cannot be known; such as are the numerous, different, and opposite Schemes and Constitutions of Hierarchy, Theocracy, or Churchism.

But Mankind, surely, could never have been thus distracted, divided, and inflamed, if they had not been fighting in the Dark, or bullying for a Whore. 'Tis their Lusts and Appetites they are endeavouring to gratify, and that is the best *Church*, or true Church, which can give them the best Security for sinning with Impunity, and of a Reward from the true God, by serving *Belial* or *Mammon*.

For this great Privilege and Blessing to Mankind, the hierarchical or theocratic Rulers have been always Competitors; and they  
who

who have given the best Security for *Happiness*, without *Virtue*, have always had the strongest Party, and best-endowed Churches. And from hence it has happened, that every national Church, with the best Revenues annexed to it, has alway been the *true Church*, or that Image of *Diana* which was certainly and infallibly sent down from *Jupiter*, and whom *all Asia, and the World worship*. The Gratifications of Lust and Appetite, either in the Service of *Belial*, or *Mammon*, is the true Liberty, or unavoidable Necessity of Mankind; and that is surely the true God, and the true Church, where this can be done with the least Hazard, and greatest Hopes.

This lets one into the whole Secret of Hierarchies, Theocracies, and human, spiritual Jurisdictions in Matters of Religion and Conscience. The Devil, as an Angel of Light, always speaks from Heaven, and when he has thus revealed his Will, and sent down a hierarchical Church upon Earth, or a civil Theocracy, he has taken the best Measures he could to vacate and elude all the Laws of God and Nature. And as the common Enemy of Mankind is beyond all Dispute the God of this World, he has taken all possible Care to reward his true Votaries with the best Places and Preferments in his own Kingdom.

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From what has been said, I think it is very plain, how Politicians came to assume a Jurisdiction over Conscience, and by what Means the most different and opposite *Church Constitutions* have been resolved into *Theocracies*. For however destructive this might be to the civil Rights and Properties of human Society, it was always the *spiritual Interest* of Mankind to have it so; and Heaven has been so indulgent to us as to humour us in this human Frailty and Foible, and to suffer us to be as senseless and wicked, as the Hierarchy could make us.

§. 10. But to prevent Misconstruction, I must here beg Leave to explain myself a little upon what is past, before I go farther. The infinite Mischiefs to Mankind, which have arisen from confounding human Policy with Theocracy, or Religion with a civil, temporal Jurisdiction, are so very obvious and undeniable, that I hope in representing this, I shall not be thought to have exceeded the Bounds of Truth or Decency: But I would not have it concluded from hence, that I look upon all Church Constitutions and Regulations for the publick Worship of God to be needless, or of no Benefit to Society. Nothing can be farther from my Thoughts, or Intention, than this. The more the several Duties and Obligations of moral Truth and Righteousness are enforced and inculcated, and the more publickly and solemnly this is done, the

the greater Hopes there must be of a general Reformation, and a stricter Regard to the Laws of God and Nature in any Society; and while the publick Ministers of Religion keep to this, they do their Duty, answer the End of their Office, and deserve all due Encouragement, Respect, and Honour. Against such, therefore, I have said nothing, and would sooner lose my Tongue, or right Hand, than say or do any Thing to discourage them. Let them promote the Cause of God and Virtue, and true, undefiled Religion in the World, and then, I am sure, they must have the Thanks, Applause, and kind Offices of every wise and good Man. Let them make it appear in Life and Reality, that they have true Religion and Virtue nearest at Heart, that they regard more the spiritual Duties, than the temporal Rewards of their Office; and that they are more concerned to reform the World, than to enrich themselves; and then see, what Deist or Infidel would dare open his Mouth against them. But if they will substitute historical Faith, or Church Ceremony for Religion, Authority for Reason, outward Practice for inward Purity, the Wealth and Power of the Church for the Power of Godliness, and human Contrivances for divine Institutions; if they will do this, I say, let them look to themselves, and maintain their Credit and Emoluments as long as they can. But I can tell them as a Friend  
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(and they had better hear it from an Enemy, than not know or consider it at all) that Deism and Infidelity will always prevail against such Sort of *Churchism*; and if they have no other Way to support the Dignity of Christianity, they need not think it strange, if they should lose their own Livings. But if the Parliament and People of *England* should ever come to think, that their ecclesiastical Revenues are ill-bestow'd, and that such a Fund of national Property might be applied to better Uses, I am sure, that the Pride, Avarice, and bad Example of the Clergy will be the Cause of it; and then, perhaps, they might not be able to prove their temporal Wealth and Power to have been of divine Institution, nor to support a Church which they had overthrown.

§. 11. I have now considered what I have always thought the principal Causes of moral Error, and I wish the Knowledge of the Disease, and its Cause, could as well point out the Remedy. But as nothing can contribute more to it, I shall venture to make a short Essay towards the Cure. And here, as I have rais'd no Devil to torture, or fright any Man out of his Wits, I have no spiritual Opiates to apply, but shall only propose such Remedies, as in Nature and Reason might be thought sufficient.

Now here, the Cure of moral Error is very short, and the Reason of it extremely obvious.

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The Reason of it is so very clear, that the most obstinate or inveterate Patient under this Disease cannot doubt of, or dispute the Remedy. It is no other but this, Impartiality, or an open, honest Regard to *Truth*. A Readiness and Disposition to receive and embrace Truth where-ever it may be found, whether in this Party, or the other, among Friends, or Enemies; and whether it should happen, after an honest Search, or free Enquiry, to fall on the Side of Education, Custom, and Example, or against it.

*Truth* is a Thing which every Man is ready to declare for, and thinks he has its sure Possession. But then it must be in his own little Sphere, though ever so contemptible a Hut or House. He must never look Abroad, or go out of Doors for it. Every Monster of Imagination, in his own Cell, is *Truth*; and out of his own Circle, if he should meet with any Thing ever so clear, convincing, and irresistible, he is sure it cannot be *Truth*. It denies or questions the Authority and Infallibility of his Party, his Masters, and Teachers, and even of his own Parents; it condemns his Education, disputes the hereditary Right of his *Faith*, and would make him doubt of his natural Property and Possession, and whether he had not been hitherto abused, imposed on, brought up upon wrong Principles of Reason, and cheated of his Senses; and therefore, surely, such an Intruder, Make-bait,



Make-bait, and Disturber of the *Peace*; can never be *Truth*. The Man knows nothing of the Face or Appearance of *Truth*, and therefore, may be easily cheated by any common Whore, or Strumpet.

This is the common Case of Mankind, with respect to *moral Truth*, which they are never taught to reason upon, but rather taught out of it, by all the Power and Prejudice of *Education*. They are taught never to hearken to any Reason, or to hear or believe any Thing, but what their Parents, or Party, their Catechisms, or Catechisers, had instilled into, and impressed upon them, in their earliest Youth, and before they were capable of thinking or judging for themselves. God, it seems, sent them into the World, not to chuse their own *Religion*, or think at all about it, any farther than others had thought and settled Matters for them before.

This is a short and easy Way to *Truth*, where a Man has no great Interest or Concern what is true, and what not, and where he is to take up with all his Rules and Measures of Truth and Probability from Principles which he had never thought of, and never conceived himself obliged to think, or form any Judgment of his own about it at all. What pray! would you think, that I was born and bred a *Fool*, or that my Formers and Teachers have not been as learned and good as yours; Sir, I scorn your Supposition, and if  
you

you would reason or argue at all, it must be with my *Betters*. This is a short Way of avoiding Conviction, and setting aside Reason, by which any of the Dupes and Tools of a Party can silence and confute any *Reasoner* in the World, much more effectually than any of their learned *Betters* could. By this Means, the silliest Dupe of a Party shall confute the best Moralist, and *sound Faith* shall pass for *invincible Reason*. Morality, in this Case, is quite set aside, and *Reason* must knock under, because *Faith* puts round too many *Bumpers*.

Any Man, even the most ignorant and stupid, by a little Change of Persons, and making the Case another Man's, and not his own, would easily see the Absurdity and Ridicule of such a Way of Reasoning as this: It is what I have been born and bred to; it has been always the Opinion of Ancestors, Church, and best Friends; my Understanding and Conscience have been formed, settled, and confirmed in it; I have the best Security in the World for what I am resolved to believe; it is not now in my Power to think, or believe otherwise; and therefore, my *Faith*, *Opinion*, or *Religion*, must be *true*. Any one must see, that such a Way of thinking and talking must hold good at all Times, and in every Place alike, and that such a Reasoner can be only in the right or wrong by Chance. Any Man, from the least Reasoning, Thought, or  
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sober

sober Reflexion in the World, must easily see, that the Opinion of a Majority, the Interest or Clang of a Party, human Laws and Constitutions, Custom, Education, &c. can be no Rule of *Truth*. No Man, in his right Senses, would ever argue at this Rate; I have the Majority on my Side, I am of the Religion of my Country, I have alway, and shall for ever stand by the *Vote*, *Religion*, or *Truth* of my *Party*. This is my *Faith*, my *Conscience*, my *Religion*; and if you are of any other *Faith*, *Religion*, or *Conscience*, I am armed and prepared for *Self-Defence* against you.

I believe this would not be thought a just Defence of *Truth*, and yet it is the only Defence of a *Party*, of *implicit Faith*, or the Right of not thinking or reasoning at all. What, have we all the Right of Inheritance, of uninterrupted Possession, and the Sanctions of our Ancestors, spiritual Guides and Teachers, and all the great Masters and Formers of our Faith and Religion, and would you set us upon thinking and reasoning about it now? Do you think, that we have nothing to mind but Religion, or that this is a Matter which requires any Thought or Concern of ours now, after the painful, laborious Studies and Enquiries of so many past Ages? But pray, Gentlemen, who have thought for you all this while, or how came you by this Security of possessing *Truth* without thinking?

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But I must own, that this is a very impertinent Question, because you have told me already, that you were born to *Truth*, and that you never thought yourself obliged to think of it at all. You have Prescription and uninterrupted Possession on your Side, the established, unquestionable Succession of many Ages, and who would dare dispute such a Right? \* Why, indeed, Gentlemen, this Argument is strong, you have Numbers and Authority on your Sides, and if *Truth* had no better Voucher, or Security, she must soon be voted out of the World. But pray put this Matter to a fair Issue, and let all Mankind meet in one grand Council afore you determine any Thing absolute or certain about it. I hope, upon such a Trial, you would never make your own diminutive Party, or little Faction, the *World*, or that you would expect, upon such a Trial, not to be distanced and laughed out of Countenance. You are, indeed, born to Infallibility, upon the Strength and Credit of your *Party*; but this should not pass for *Reason*; I hope you would not set the World on Fire about it; or, if you did, you ought to consider the Consequences, and take a little Care of yourselves.

You say, it is the Opinion of your Party, it is the Constitution of your Church, it is your hereditary Faith, and the Terms of Salvation and Acceptance with God, to which

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you



you were born to, and to which you have a natural, indisputable Right. Be it so, but pray never sue upon this Title out of your own Court; make sure of your Judges before you plead the Right, or otherwise it would be ten Thousand to one but you must lose the Cause.

But this Plea of Inheritance, Prescription, Church Constitution, &c. for Truth, Religion, and the right Way to Salvation, is so extremely absurd and ridiculous, that no Man would ever plead it, if he was not under some Necessity of maintaining something or other in Opposition to, and Defiance of Truth. Let a Man pretend what he will in such a Case, his own Conscience must condemn him, so far as he has any Thought, Reason, or Conscience at all. But Conscience, in such Cases, has nothing to do with Truth, Reason, or Religion. *Conscience* here justifies every Fool, every Bigot, and every Enemy to Mankind; but where *Conscience* is thus brought in upon the Plea of *Sincerity*, *Truth* is immediately shut out, and not to be regarded. Every Man's *wrong Head* is his *Conscience*, and *Sincerity* is nothing but *Education* without Thought, or farther Enquiry.

§. 12. I have here brought on a short Quarrel between *Truth* and *Sincerity*. For though one might think them to be both Friends and Confederates in Righteousness, yet no two Persons in the World have been set more at

Variance. *Truth* is pleaded against *Sincerity*, and *Sincerity* against *Truth*; and, as the Case now stands, it seems next to impossible to reconcile them. Every Fool, or Impostor, is, or may be *sincere*; but *Truth* is a Thing quite out of Reach, and not to be known, or judged of. This is such a Phænomenon in Divinity, as requires a little Solution and Elucidation from Philosophy. And here, I think, it must be very evident, that *Truth*, *moral Truth*, or Righteousness, or Rectitude of Temper, Disposition, and Action, has been confounded with what they falsely call *Religion*, i. e. *Churchism*, *Institution*, *revealed Faith*, or positive Law of Salvation. Of these positive Schemes, or Systems of historical Faith, instituted Religion, or Church Constitutions, the Number is infinite, and their Differences and Repugnances irreconcilable. Here, therefore, *Sincerity* substituted for *Truth*, was an excellent Expedient to prevent farther Mischief between those who would be eternally disputing about Matters which can never be decided, or which being indifferent in themselves, are not worth deciding, or talking of at all. By this Means the most opposite Parties, who could have so much Charity for one another, might be equally in the right, and have equal *Truth* on their Side, because equally *sincere*. But where *Sincerity* is thus brought in, it is a very plain and evident Concession, that the *Truth* is of no Moment, and consequently,

quently, that all their learned Debates and Expence of Words, Time, and Paper, might much better be spared.

But 'tis very strange, that these learned, expensive Debates should be about *Religion*, and that Religion should be a Thing not at all connected with Truth! A very plain Sign this, that what is here called Religion, and contended about as such, is a Thing of no Consequence, and can have no Relation at all to the *moral Character*, i. e. the prevailing, governing Love of Truth, Order, and Rectitude.

It is no Wonder the Heads and Leaders of opposite Church *Factions* should thus destroy the Nature and Notion of *Truth*, and confound *Religion* with *Churchism*. Their Reputation and Interest, their Wealth and Honour, and even their very Bread, may possibly depend upon it. But that the rest of Mankind, who have no such Interest in the Case, but the quite contrary, should be thus deluded and imposed on, can only be accounted for from the Power and Prejudice of Education, Example, and insensibly contracted and confirmed Habits. In all the inferior and less important Concerns of Life, Men are taught from their earliest Youth to seek and judge of Truth in the natural Way, by Observation, Experience, and impartial Reasoning. But in the great Affair of Religion they are quite put out of this natural, rational

nal Way of seeking and judging of Truth. They are to take their Religion absolutely and implicitly upon such positive Authority, as they happen to be first deeply impressed with, which they are taught from the first Dawnings of their Reason, that Religion is a Thing above Reason, and that supernatural, or revealed *Faith*, cannot be subject to, or be judged of by the Laws and Principles of human Understanding and Reason. And by this Means we see, that Men are often so fast bound under these Chains of Darkness, that they are incapable of any Conviction, or any farther Entrance of Truth into the Mind. When a Man has been secured in this mental Darkness, and the Light of Truth thus barr'd and shut out from him, no Strength of Argument, or Force of Reasoning, can ever bring him to give up, or so much as doubt of the Authority of his *Church*, or the Infalibility of her Articles, Creeds, and external Modes of Worship. By this Means we see an antichristian Kingdom or Power of Darkness has been erected and established throughout Christendom, some of whose decreed Articles of Faith, as necessary to Salvation, are absolutely repugnant to the universal Sense, Reason, and Experience of Mankind, and to all the Laws and Principles by which human Understanding can judge of Truth. And though the hierarchical Rulers, and chief Managers of this dark, enslaving Design, must

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know,



know, that their Doctrine is false, contradictory, and impossible in Nature, yet the blinded, deluded Vulgar receive it as Gospel, the only Way to Salvation, and the true Church and Kingdom of Christ upon Earth. And this shews how far the human Understanding may be depraved and corrupted, even to the intire Perversion of Reason, and Loss of all natural Truth whatever.

How far the blinded, deluded Subjects of this Hierarchy may have been led into, and kept under invincible Ignorance and Error, and be so far excusable, must be left to the unerring, righteous Judgment of God himself, who is sole Arbiter in such Cases. But the most redundant Charity cannot extend to their hierarchical Rulers, while they are using their utmost Efforts to render useless, and deprive Mankind of the only Faculty that God had given them to judge of Truth, and distinguish it from Falshood.

§. 13. One would think, that such high Claims of a Resignation of all human Sense and Reason, should be founded on some superior Light or Rule of Judgment, to which all human Sense and Reason must submit. But when we come to enquire into this supernatural Light, it is nothing in the World but the *Authority* of a human, infallible Hierarchy, which they have the Impudence to call the *Authority of God*. But how can they prove this *Interest* of theirs to be the *Autho-  
rity*

city of God? Or how shall we know, when we have given them up our Senses and Reason, that they will lead us right? Why, this must be taken for granted, and if you will not believe them to be the true Ministers of Christ, Ambassadors from Heaven, and the authorized Interpreters of God's Will and Law to Mankind; I say, if you will not believe this, they cannot prove it, and you may go and be damned. But, surely, we ought to go any where, rather than to such Guides, and if one should chance to go the wrong Way, the Devil himself cannot make it worse.

Christ and the Apostles, they say, left a standing, visible, and infallible Authority upon Earth, to their lawful Successors and Delegates, to settle all Matters which might come into Debate after their Decease, and to which every true Christian ought to submit under the Penalty of Damnation. They had Power and Authority from Christ to govern the whole World, to unite them in Judgment and Opinion, and to make all Christians of one Church. But this Power and Authority, if they ever received it, they have never executed it, and therefore, I am sure, were Christ and the Apostles now living, they would *change the Ministry*. Those religious Incendiaries, and spiritual Firebrands, are their own Witnesses, that they have never discharged their Trust, as to keeping the World in Peace, or leading them into the

true Religion; and therefore, whenever Judgment and Damnation comes, let them look to it, that they are not made the first Examples of divine Vengeance. But you would not submit to us, say they, and we could do no more than we could. But where then was your Authority and Commission to do more than you could possibly do? Or where was the Wisdom of employing such insignificant and incompetent *Tools*? Or where would be the Wisdom and Virtue of Mankind in giving up their natural, common Sense and Reason, to your exorbitant and impudent Claims of Authority? Whether you are the Ministers and Vicegerents of Christ, or not, needs no long Debate, let your Actions speak, and the antichristian Kingdom you have established: Let the moral Truth, Virtue, and Honour, the Justice, Mercy, and Charity of the *Roman* Hierarchy, declare this.

There is no other Centre of Unity, say you, no other Way to bring Mankind into the System of Faith and Opinion, but by submitting to your Authority as divine, *i. e.* there is no other Way to make us of one Opinion, but to be plagued and tormented for speaking our Minds, and this makes us all of one Faith and Religion, without altering any Opinion or Judgment at all, and while we firmly believe all such Authors of Unity to be the greatest Enemies to Truth, and to

Mankind,

Mankind, the vilest Impostors, and the very worst of Rogues.

§. 14. The many different Schemes and Constitutions of Churchism, how inconsistent soever with one another, or with themselves, could never have any very bad Consequences, or be greatly prejudicial to human Society, were they considered and regarded to be such as they really are, *i. e.* Matters of human Contrivance and Policy, without any prior, natural Right, or divine Institution. Was it left as much to every Man's Liberty, what *Church* he would be of, as of what *Company*, or *Club*, no great Harm could arise from it to Society. But while every such *Church Club* will be the only true *Scripture Church*, the only Door of Hope and Way to Salvation, they may be left to fight it out among themselves; but no Man of Sense or Virtue ought to keep them Company. In this Case, indeed, it is necessary, that there should be some governing *Mother Church* to bring them all into her Bosom, or send them all together to the Devil, whither the Mother herself must go at last, as soon as she has executed her divine Commission, and given up her usurped Authority.

To plead a divine Right, or Institution, for any Church Scheme, or Constitution now subsisting in Christendom, is the most groundless and idle Pretence in the World. These Church Constitutions, we find, are as different



rent as the Laws, Settlements, Customs, and Manners of different Countries, or as the Fancies and Humours of Men of different Tastes and Sentiments. They have been formed, from Time to Time, under very different Interests and Circumstances, by publick Authority, or common Consent of particular, independent Congregations or Assemblies, who have agreed to worship God under such and such Forms, Rites, and external Usages. Here, therefore, every Man is as much at Liberty as what Company he will be of, or what Club he will join with, as best suiting his Business, Conveniency, or Humour.

§. 15. From what has been said, it may appear how necessary it is to distinguish between the internal, real Acts of *Religion*, and the external, modal Expressions of it, and the infinite Mischiefs to Mankind, which have always arisen, and must always arise from confounding of these two essentially different Things.

The inward Principle or Motive of Love to God, to Truth, and to Virtue, is the Religion of the Action; but the external, modal Expression of it may be infinitely different, and depend on the different Customs, Manners, settled Modes or Constitutions of different Churches, Nations, or worshipping Societies.

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You worship God, you say, you own and revere one supreme Deity; and you do this openly, and avowedly, in publick Societies. Very well, and so do I. But what then? Must I express this in your Language, wear your Dress, use your Posture, or do it all in your Company? Have you monopolized and secured to your own Benefit, the Language, the Dress, the Posture, and all the outward Expressions and Appearances of Religion? Is this your divine Authority, your infallible Interpretation of Scripture, and your uninterrupted Succession from the Apostles? Did Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, ever fix the Language, the Dress, the Posture, or any of the outward Modes and Forms in which God was to be acceptably worshiped? Or, if they did, has any Hierarchy, Church, or worshiping Society now in the World kept to it? If you will say this openly and fairly, I should be glad to hear farther from you; but if you cannot, with any Grace or Honour, say so, to what Purpose is all your Noise and Outcry, or what are you driving at, while you are thus fomenting Divisions, and setting the World on Fire about your external, positive, revealed Modes, divine Institutions, and different, repugnant Forms of *Churchism*? Gentlemen, if you have any Patent, or Commission from Christ, to interpret his Laws, to remove all Difficulties about them, and to ascertain revealed Truth, so as to satisfy  
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our Understanding in so material a Point, why have you not done it, or how come you still to be so infinitely divided among yourselves? If you should think these to be deistical Questions, or the Cavils only of Hereticks and Unbelievers, I hope you will take Care in Time to come to remove the Occasions, or otherwise I doubt you yourselves will, at last, be accountable for it, as the true Authors of all the Deism and Infidelity in the Christian World.

§. 16. I think I have said enough to shew the Folly and Absurdity of confounding Religion with Churchism, or the internal, real Character, Temper, and Disposition with the mere outward Appearances, Shell, or Shadow of it; and I thought it the more necessary to do this, as I take it to be the principal Cause of *moral Error*. And this brings me again to the same Remedy as proposed at first, which is *Impartiality*, or an honest, upright Regard to *Truth* where-ever it should be found, either at Home, or Abroad, among Friends, or Enemies. This, I know, is a Principle which the Heads and Leaders of Parties can never act upon, while temporal Wealth and Power, and the Reputation of Infallibility, or unerring Judgment, are their real Motives. And therefore, I shall leave these to the Conviction of their own *Experience*, or to the last and most effectual Remedy of all, which is the *Grace of God*. But for others

others who might be willing to know the Truth, and who have no Interest against it, I would hope that I have said enough.

§. 17. Nothing but Impartiality, or the prevailing Love of Truth, as above, can be necessary to the Discovery of it, and the forming a right Judgment about it. The honest Indifferency of a Traveller here is all that can be requisite. The Traveller is not to chuse his own Way, or take that which he likes best, if he would come to his Journey's End, and reach the Place intended; he is only to enquire and inform himself which is the right Way, and then take it and proceed in it, because it is the right or true Way, whether it be fair or foul, rough or smooth. Were Men thus fair, impartial, and honest, they could not miss of moral Truth, or the true Paths of Life.

But though the Rule here is plain and easy, and such as no honest, well-designing Man can mistake, yet it must be owned, that the Practice of it, in many Cases, may be very difficult. If a Man will resolve to stick to Truth, and always do what is just, right and fit, he must sometimes, perhaps, be forced to break with his Party, disoblige his Friends, and give up some considerable Interest upon which he depended. He must sacrifice his Life and Fortune, and all his Friends and Hopes in the World to *Truth*. This is, doubtless, a pretty hard Trial of Virtue. But  
then



then it is the Strength and Glory of it; and it is rarely or never known, in the Conduct of Providence, that a Man of steady, resolute, exemplary *Virtue*, shall be forsaken, or suffered to sink, whatever he may suffer or undergo from a prejudiced, unrighteous Party or Faction. The only Question here is, whether he must obey *God*, or *Man*, and whether Truth and Virtue, or human, knavish Policy must save him? The Trial of Virtue, in such a Case, as I have just now said, is the Strength and Glory of it, and must render it the more eminent, conspicuous, and rewardable in the Sight of God and Man. And I could only here wish a just Comparison and Computation to be made between the Lovers of Truth and Virtue, and the Lovers of private Interest, and the senseless, impudent Claims of a *Party*. But this is certain, that a Man who would sacrifice, or give up nothing to Truth, and who must know the Opinions of others, before he can declare his own, cannot be thought a Lover of Truth, or a Man of any Virtue at all. He may, perhaps, by such a Scheme of Policy, and what he calls prudential Management, secure to himself some private, low, paltry Interest, which he may think necessary to save his Bacon, and his Bread: But he can never hereby secure to himself the Reputation of Honesty, and the inward Pleasure and heart-felt Joy of well-doing. Such a poor Man, conscious

scious of his own *Weakness*, not to say *Insincerity*, works harder for his Bread, and earns it more at the Sweat of his Brows, than the most indigent Beggar, or Day-Labourer. He loves *Truth* and *Reason*, so far as *Truth* and *Reason* can get him a Maintenance, or promote his nearer and dearer *Interest*; but if he cannot live with them, he must live without them. God sent him into the World to live, and left to his Discretion and human Prudence, whether he was to live by Truth, or Falshood, by plain, open Honesty, or by Hypocrisy and Disguise.

*Prudentius* is a Man who loves Truth and Sincerity, and wishes well to all true and sincere Men. But he would not venture too far on their Bottom, without some other Security. He has a Fortune to make as well as other Men, and he would not stake his Fortune upon his *Honesty*. *Truth* is his *Friend*, but *Interest* is his *Darling*, and he will at any Time own the Truth, and openly and honestly declare for it, if you can secure his *Interest* by it, and insure him, that his *Prudence* shall not suffer by his *Integrity*. But *Prudentius* is a Man who knows the World very well, and, as a true Friend, would always wish you better, when you prefer and promote Truth against the more valuable Consideration of a personal, private *Property*.

Well, *Prudentius*, I always took you as a Friend, and I doubt not but you would have served

served me in any Thing so far as you could have done it without diserving yourself. You have been always *prudently close*, and I have been as *openly sincere*. But tell me now, I beseech you, after twenty Years Experience, what have you got in your Way more than I have in mine? You have got the Reputation of a *prudent* Man, with a Suspicion of *Honesty*, and I have secured the Reputation of an *honest* Man with a Suspicion of *Prudence*. And if you think your Gains more than mine, or that you have ventured on a better Chance, I envy you not the Profit.

But I would not be understood here, as if I thought all Truth of equal Importance, or as if a Man might not, in some Cases, conceal or disguise the Truth of his Opinion, where he is under no Obligation of speaking his Mind, and where declaring his Opinion might be prejudicial to himself, and could be of no Service to any Body else. Here is, no doubt, Room enough, and a Necessity for *human Prudence*. If a physical Truth being known, would be of very ill Consequence and destructive to a Man himself, or to the Society of which he is a Member and constituent Part; if such a Truth, I say, would be thus applied, it ought not only to be suppressed and concealed, but even denied and disclaimed, if Necessity or Self-Preservation require. But this can never be  
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the Case with Regard to moral Truth, or the Reasonableness and Fitness of Actions.

A physical Truth may be a moral Falshood, and to make known such a Truth, or not to suppress and conceal it as much as possible by Words or Actions, may be infinitely mischievous to Society, and, therefore, immoral. This, I think, I have proved by Instances sufficiently clear and convincing, and which need not be repeated here, whatever our philosophical Divines, or theological Casuists may think of it. But I hope they will not undertake to prove from Revelation, that every physical Falshood, either, in Words or Actions, is *immoral*, or at least that they will not bring their great Saint-Errant *David* to vouch for this, nor even the holy Patriarch *Abraham* himself, the Father of the Faithful: Neither of whom ever scrupled, on proper Occasions, to save themselves, or secure the true Religion, by what their Disciples would now call *Lying*. But this is only incidental, and on the Bye.

But it will be more to my present Purpose, to shew the Nature of that *moral Truth* which is indispensable, and which must be always due even to an Enemy, and in a State of War. And this is the grand Rule of all moral Conduct, of doing as one would be done by, under the same Circumstances, and by only supposing a Change of Persons, that I am another Man, and he me. This is the

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Foundation of all the Faith of Treaties, and all Friendship between one independent Nation and another, where Force being laid aside, Peace is agreed upon. This is the Law of Nature and Nations, and the only Foundation of Peace and Reconciliation between Persons, or Parties, that have been in a State of Enmity and War; the Justice of doing by an Enemy, as I would expect he should do by me in the same Case, and the Faith or Veracity of solemn Treaties, Promises, and Vows, the most indispensable Obligation in all Society; and this is *moral Truth*. This is due, as I said, from an Enemy in a State of War, and absolutely necessary, in order to any Peace or Reconciliation between Persons, or Parties at Variance.

All this is plain enough. But then there is another Consideration of *moral Truth*, as it stands opposed to *human Prudence*. So it is called, and I cannot unchristen it. What I here mean is, saving or screening a Man's self at the Expence of moral Truth, and of what he himself knows, or believes to be *morally true*. *Prudentius* would gladly own, and even zealously support and contend for moral Truth and Rectitude, against the Errors and Foibles of his own Party, if he was not afraid of suffering from it in some little, temporal, private Interest or other, in which he depends upon them. His Judgment and Conscience draw him one Way, and his  
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private Interest and Affairs another. He loves Truth, and would abide by it, if he dared; but he must not sacrifice his Interest, for the most important Truth in the World.

It may be worth Enquiry here, how such a Person as *Prudentius*, who loves Truth, and would fain be honest, should come to act such a double Part, as to desert or betray that very Truth, which in Judgment and Conscience he approves of. And this seems to me owing to the too great Weight and Influence of two other Persons upon him, whom I would distinguish by the Names of *Philarchus* and *Simplicius*.

*Philarchus* is a Man of great Reach and Penetration. He has studied Men and Books, and thoroughly understands human Nature. He knows all the Blemishes and Foibles of Mankind, the Weakness of their Understandings, the Strength of their Appetites and Passions, their Love of Indolence and Ease, and their strong, natural Aversion to every Thing that might give the least Pains or Trouble, or put them to the most ungrateful Task of *thinking*. *Philarchus* loves to rule, he is capable of thinking, and willing to spare others the Pain of it. He is passionately fond of Popularity, as knowing that none but the unthinking Vulgar can judge of his Wisdom and Virtue; but he hates the Company of Men of Sense and Honour, whom he looks upon as his Rivals, though they would scorn

the Competition. He does not absolutely condemn Morality and Virtue, but as much as possible depreciates and runs it down in Comparison of Religion, especially authoritative, positive, revealed Religion. Religion, saith he, is purely an historical Thing, and must depend on the Testimonies of Antiquity, which none but learned Men, who have made it their proper Study, can judge of. They who talk so much of moral Truth and Rectitude, are Impostors, Deists, and Infidels. They may talk, indeed, of Truth and Reason in *Morality*, but God did not form Mankind with Understandings capable of distinguishing Right and Wrong, Truth and Falshood in *Religion*. He has authorized and appointed wiser and more learned Men to judge of this, and to direct you in the right Way to Salvation. And to these you ought to submit, as you would to any other learned, honest Men in their own Way.

*Simplicius* is charmed with the Strength and Beauty of this Reasoning, which all tends to save him the Trouble of thinking and judging for himself. He admires the Wisdom and Goodness of God in making so excellent a Provision for the Happiness of Mankind; especially when he finds that moral Truth, impartial, free Enquiry, and strict, rigid Virtue, are left out of the Account. He quits his Reason, yields up his Understanding, and renounces his very Senses to *Philarchus*,  
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and thanks him, in the Name of all Truth and Goodness, for putting him into the safe Way to Salvation, without any farther Pains or Trouble of Enquiry.

*Simplicius* thus gain'd over, makes a thousand Profelytes, and spreads the Fame of *Philarchus* to the Ends of the Earth; for he by an easy Yoke of Government, and blind Authority, undertakes for every Man's Happiness, without any Judgment or Enquiry of their own. And thus he is enthroned, and declared King and absolute Monarch of all the *Simplicians*.

*Prudentius* sees and laughs at all this. He hates the Imposture and Knavery of *Philarchus*, and despises the Ignorance and Folly of *Simplicius*; but he has not Courage, Resolution, or Honesty enough to declare or protest against either. He has a Game to play between them both, and is therefore to approve or condemn neither, any farther than is consistent with his main End, which is to save himself, and make his proper Advantage of the Knave and Fool too.

I should admire this Conduct of *Prudentius*, were it not for a small Scruple I have, with regard to the Honesty of it. But besides, I have been credibly informed, that *Prudentius* will be sometimes of one Side, and sometimes of the other. He is for *Philarchus* or *Simplicius* in any Company, as Trumps are turned up, which seems to intimate, that



he has no great Regard to Truth, and that he keeps himself neuter only to put an imaginary Cheat upon others, while he is really cheating and exposing himself.

But would any one think, that either of these Gentlemen believed any Thing of a God, a Providence, or a righteous Judgment? They are all great Competitors for *Religion*, but who could imagine they had ever taken moral Truth, or Virtue, into the Account? But this leads me to the last and great concerning Point of all, with regard to *Providence*, or divine Influence and Superintendency in the Government of the World, the Discussion of which will be the Business of the next Chapter.

## CH A P. VII.      SECT. I.

*Of Divine Providence, or GOD's preserving and governing the World.*

I HAVE distinctly considered, in the six preceding Chapters, the general Laws of Nature, with regard to the material, animal, and intelligent or rational Parts of the Creation. And in this Disquisition I have, as, I think, demonstratively prov'd, that these  
general

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general Laws are the fix'd, established Principles of divine Agency, or those eternal, immutable Laws and Conditions of Truth, Reason and Order, originally settled by the Deity for the Preservation and Government of the World, by his continued Power and Presence, or incessant, active and intelligent Energy. This is the Philosophy which I take to have been the Divinity and Theology of innocent Nature, before the corrupt, animal Appetites and Passions had got the Ascendant, and usurped the Throne of Reason, if ever there was such a State of Men upon Earth. But this is a Question which I am not now to dispute; for the Inquiry here is, not what we were before all the Records of Time, but what we now are, and what we may or ought to be.

The great Point which I have hitherto endeavoured to explain, illustrate, and confirm, is this, That the Universe is one intire Piece or *Whole*, of which all the Parts are necessarily and mutually related to, and connected with each other by a *Unity of Design*. This Unity of Design, and necessary Connexion of the several Parts, which makes it a complete Whole, or perfect Piece, is a Plan which must have been laid at first by the Architect or Contriver, with a perfect Foresight of all future Incidents and Emergencies. The Laws by which such an intire Piece of dependent Being were to be governed, and the Unity of

Design preserved, could not be left to Chance, or unforeseen Accidents, which might make frequent Interpositions, and Alterations of the general Laws necessary on particular Occasions and Incidents not foreseen or provided for. Such a Thought would be unworthy of God, and scarce consistent with the Character of a wise Man, or good Designer of any Sort.

So far as our Experience and Observation can go, and our Knowledge can go no farther, we do not find that the general establish'd Laws of Nature are suspended, or set aside to serve particular Purposes. The Attraction, Gravity, Resistance, or mechanical Powers and Properties of Bodies are never destroyed, or suspended, to prevent any particular Evil, or imaginary ill Consequence which might arise from it. The Weight of a Stone is not destroy'd, or taken off, to prevent its falling upon, or killing a Man. God does not suspend, or destroy the natural mechanical Powers and Properties of Fire and Water, to prevent Conflagrations, Inundations, or the Destruction of particular Countries, Towns, or Cities, or take away the natural Appetites and Instincts of the brute Creatures, to prevent any particular incidental Ills or Mischances to the human Kind. The Laws of Matter and Motion, Appetite and Instinct, Intelligence and free Agency, are eternally and invariably the same, so far as our Experience, Observation, or Knowledge can

can carry us. And were not this so, the World would be governed, and Nature conducted upon no certain Principle, Plan, or Unity of Design at all, but all Nature must, every now and then, be disturb'd, unhinged, and thrown into Convulsions, to answer particular, unforeseen, and unprovided for Ends and Purposes.

Whether this is the Notion which our Divines have generally had of Miracles, I cannot say; they have been much perplex'd upon the Subject, and have never been able to define, or ascertain a Miracle. If by particular Interpositions, or particular Providence, they mean any particular, immediate Agency of the Deity, suspending, destroying, or setting aside the general Laws of Nature on particular Occasions, I am fully satisfy'd they will never be able to prove any such Thing, in any one single Instance.

But it will not follow from hence, that God does not govern the World in Wisdom and Righteousness, or that he has not provided by his general Laws, for all particular Cases and Incidents, so as to answer all the Ends and Purposes of moral Truth and Rectitude. The wise and righteous Governor of the World may not, perhaps, square his Measures by any Systems of Divinity now extant. But I hope to explain and settle this important Point of *Providence* upon the Principles of *Physico-Theology*, as the Foundation of all moral



moral Truth and Religion, without making God a Man, resembling him to a weak, incompetent, or unskilful Artist.

§. 2. It will be here necessary to consider a little farther the Order of Nature, or Conditions and Laws of divine Agency, with regard to the several Ranks and Classes of Beings one above another. This may be traced so far as Observation, and Experience, and Knowledge founded upon that will go, and be carry'd still farther from the Analogy of Nature, or the Unity and Simplicity of the Ways of God, and Works of Nature. This was the Method taken by that great Philosopher, *Newton*, who, when he found the Principle or Law of Gravity to hold good, from the Earth and Bodies nearest to us, and most within our Observation, to others more remote, and throughout the whole solar System, concluded, that all Bodies, universally, must be governed and directed by the same general Law, tho' his Observations could not extend through the whole infinite Expansion of Nature.

All Sensation, Appetite, and Instinct, we see depend on, and is necessarily and inseparably connected with modify'd Matter and Motion, from which it arises, and without which it never appears or exists; on the other hand, those Sensations, Appetites, and Affections, impress'd from without, excite such organical Motions, or spontaneous Actions in the  
Animal,

Animal, as are necessary for the Preservation of the animal Life and Species.

In this natural, necessary Reciprocation and Connexion of external Impressions, and internal Sensations, Appetites, or Instincts, no one can pretend to any Thing of Liberty, free Choice, or rational Judgment. The Animal does not make his own Laws; he is not at Liberty whether he shall be externally impress'd in this Way or that, or what Effects such Impressions shall make upon his Sensations and Appetites.

Here then it is evident, that in all such Cases, the Creature does not act, but it acted upon. This active Power or Energy was not impress'd at once, and then suspended for ever afterwards; for then it would be a mere Compliment to the Creator, to say, that God made a World, at first, that could, in all Time to come, sustain and govern itself by its own intrinsic Powers and Properties: A Compliment which no natural or moral Philosopher would ever make to the Deity, tho' some supernatural Divine may.

Here then, I think, the continued, incessant Power, Presence, and Agency of the first intelligent, universal Cause, Supporter and Preserver of all Nature, is very plain and indisputable; the perpetual Presence, Co-operation, and Concurrence of the Deity, or Author and Director of Nature, in this Case, I take

take to be very plain, beyond all reasonable Contradiction.

§. 3. But in this natural, necessary Constitution of Things, every one must see there is a Regulation, and establish'd Laws of infinite, superior Wisdom. Here is a natural Subordination and Dependence of one Creature upon another, founded in Nature, and original Contrivance, and Appointment, without giving out particular Laws, or occasional Orders from the supreme Governor, just as Occasion might serve, or Circumstances turn up. God does not send a *Prophet*, or an *Angel* to authorize a Lion to eat a Lamb, or a Fox a Goose; he never authoriz'd a Tyrant to destroy a Country, or gave Mankind an Authority, by Revelation, to eat and devour Sheep and Cattle; but his having given them Power, or Cunning enough to do it, is a plain Indication of the Ordination of Nature; and I should be glad to see all carnivorous Animals, or Flesh-eaters, prove a better Right or Title than this.

Some Creatures then, we see, by the Law and Constitution of Nature, are made subservient to, and put into the Power of others; and nothing but the insuperable Pride of Man, could pretend a supernatural Revelation for what God has naturally ordain'd. Perhaps, if Lions, Wolves, Bears, Tigers, Hawks, and other voracious Animals could reason as we do, and were as wise as we, they might prove

prove a fupernatural Revelation for deftroying and devouring all Creatures that are lefs powerful, or lefs cunning than themfelves. Upon fuch a Suppofition they would, certainly, have as much Reafon and Right on their Side as we, and, no Doubt but they would have Prophets, Minifters, and Preachers of Righteoufnefs, to make it all clear to them.

Man, by the general Law and Conftitution of Nature, is placed at the Head of this inferior Part of the Creation, and made Lord over all the Works of God below; his natural Dominion extends from the Lion to the Fly, and to the minuteft Infeft within his Notice; he prefcribes the Laws and Conditions of Life to them, and is made the Arbiter and Judge how far, and in what Cafes they are to be preferved and cherifhed, or deftroyed and rooted out. Thefe Creatures know nothing of the Knowledge, Art, and Contrivances of Man, of his Capacity, Powers, and Ways of acting, or by what Means they are often deftroy'd by Thoufands in a Moment.

Suppofe now any Species of thofe fmall Infefts, that know no more of us, than we do of any fuperior, invifible Beings above us; fuppofe them, I fay, to be endued with Reafon, fuch as ours, their organical Senfes, and Means of taking in the Notices of Things from without, remaining the fame as before: What would they think, or how muft they reafon  
about



about an infinite Number of Incidents and Accidents that befall them by the Art and Contrivance of Man, and of which they can assign no Cause? Some of them, perhaps, would resolve their Fate into Chance, and imagine there could be no Reason, Wisdom, Design, or Contrivance in what had happened. Others would conclude, it must be the immediate Hand and Power of God, or something which he had done by a particular miraculous Interposition, contrary to the general establish'd Laws of Nature. But we are sure that both these reasoning Insects would be wrong, because they know nothing of Man, or of his Powers and Ways of acting above them. These would be the vulgar Insects, and such their Reasoning: But, perhaps, there might be some among them of a more philosophical Genius, who had carried their Researches and Views of Nature a little farther; and these would conclude, from a Parity of Reason, and Analogy of Nature, that as there are an Infinity of Creatures below them, many of which had been subjected to them, and by the Law of Nature put into their Power, so there must be superior Ranks and Orders of Beings above them, of whose Powers, Capacities, and Ways of acting, they could not judge, and yet, that these superior Beings, tho' invisible or unknown to them, might have Power to do them good or hurt, to save or destroy them,

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in Consequence of the Law of their Nature, and to answer the Ends of Providence, or divine Government.

We know that such Reasonings and Conclusions would be right in Bees, Ants, &c. were they endued with that Faculty; and we have the same Reason and Analogy of Nature, that there are still Beings above us, as much superior to us in all Degrees of Perfection, as we are to the meanest Fly or Insect. There can be no Reason to doubt, but such superior Intelligences, as free Agents, have Power to act upon the Elements, and direct natural Causes, by Ways and Means unknown to us. The Art of Man, by applying Actives to Passives, in a Way of natural Mechanism, can produce the most surprizing Phænomena, such as must appear perfectly miraculous, and supernatural to those who are ignorant of the Causes and Manner of Operation. Such superior Agents may have Power to raise a Vapour from the Ocean, and direct the Storm, as much as a Chemist can from his Furnace.

§. 4 But before I can proceed farther on the Subject of Providence, it will be necessary to explain, and set in a clear Light, two different and opposite Schemes and Systems of the universal Government, and Management of Affairs.

Some have ascribed this to a blind Fatality, or unintelligent Necessity. Matter and Mo-

tion they imagine to have been eternal and necessary, and this without any original Wisdom, Contrivance, or Design, or without any prior, superior Agent, or Designer, necessarily, or by a mere fortuitous Jumble and accidental Concourse of Atoms, settled into such a Universe or System of Beings as we now see. Whether this necessary, fortuitous World was from Eternity, or whether the original, necessary, and uninformed Atoms in Motion, happened to fall into this Order, after an infinite Number of Ages, is not ascertain'd or determin'd in this System of Philosophy: But however that be, it all came about by the *Necessity of Chance*, or blind, unguided, and undesigning Matter and Motion.

This I take to have been the ancient *Epicurean* Scheme of Nature, so far as I understand it, or, at least, it is so as their Adversaries have represented it. This is, doubtless, direct and proper Atheism; but as I know of no such Atheists now, there can be no Occasion for confuting them. No Doubt but these Gentlemen were intirely ignorant of the true Laws of Nature, and knew but very little or nothing of the Beauty, Order, and Harmony of the Universe; they were ignorant of all the true, established Laws of Matter and Motion, and could see no Wisdom, Design, or Contrivance in it from first to last. The World appeared to them a mere inconsistent Jumble of Things: The celestial

Motions of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, were governed by no certain general Law, inso-much that one of them said, and an Astronomer too for that Time, if he had made a World himself and settled those Motions, he could have contrived and ordered it much better. But I believe there is no Philosopher of this Opinion now, since the true System of Nature has been known, and therefore, I shall spend no Time in confuting them, or give myself the Trouble of raking into their Ashes.

§. 5. In the last Section I considered the proper atheistical Scheme, or System of those who can see no Beauty, Order, Wisdom, or Design in the Creation: But there is another Class of Philosophers, or Divines rather, whom I would call *visionary Deists*. They own a God who created the World when he thought fit, and who governs it in perfect Wisdom, Justice, and Righteousness; but they deny that he has any Law, or Rule of Action prior to his own Will. They have a God who creates Good and Evil, Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong, and whose only Rule of Action is mere absolute Will and Pleasure. This Deity of theirs, is absolutely, and without Reserve, to be submitted to, and obey'd, and the only Way they have of knowing his Will, is a *Revelation* above *Reason*. True Faith, in this Scheme, is the only Way to Salvation. And the Ground of



this *saving Faith* is *Authority*, positive Command, or occasional Orders given out from God, in a visible and sensible Manner. Miracles of which we cannot judge, old Prophecies which we cannot distinguish from History, and the frequent Appearances, and familiar Discourses of God with Men, in ancient Times, are now the Grounds and Principles of a *reveal'd Religion*, above, and beyond all possible Judgment or Researches of *human Reason*: But I have said so much of this metaphysical Scheme of Divinity, or Christian Theology, already, that I should think it very wrong to waste more Paper with it now, in a Discourse of *divine Providence*. It is hard to know what Distinction the ancient *Epicureans* could make between *Necessity* and *Chance*, if they have been truly represented. And it is now as difficult to understand how our modern Positive-Law Men, or visionary Deists, would distinguish between Good and Evil, Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong. But surely, if God has no Rule or Law of Action, no Principle or Measure of Right or Wrong, prior to a positive, absolute Will, any Scheme of Dæmonism might be founded upon this, which would be worse than the *Epicurean Atheism*.

§. 6. From the Difficulties arising from the Schemes, as above mention'd, a third Party has arisen under the Appearance or Pretence of Moderators. They know the two opposite

site Extremes must be false, and therefore, they would join them together, and compound the Truth out of the most contrary Falshoods. They must not, with the *Epicurean* Atheist, deny all Wisdom or Design in the Creation, and resolve every Thing into blind Necessity and Chance: And they must not, with the visionary, authoritative Deist, or *Christian Jew*, assert a Deity that creates Right and Wrong, and makes Truth and Falshood depend on his own Will and Pleasure. And therefore, they will have all to be right and reasonable upon the Whole, but many Things must be true and resolved into the divine Will and Ordination, which must, otherwise, have been above, and beyond all Search and Investigation of the most perfect human Reason, and must still appear absurd and unintelligible to Reason, after all the Discoveries and Revelations of Faith. And they who cannot think so, or so tamely give up their Understanding to Faith, must be Infidels, and as bad, at least, as Atheists, even with these compounding, moderating Men. But still some People who have their Eyes open, and are resolved to see with them, will fancy that this compounding, moderating Scheme, is a mere priestly Cheat, and that the moderating Men only want to save a little *Divinity* for a *Maintenance*.

But surely there must be a Medium between such Extremes. To resolve Things

into blind Necessity or Chance, or into mere absolute Will and Pleasure, would be equally absurd. Absolute Will and Pleasure, to us, as moral Agents, would be the same Thing as Necessity or Chance; for there can be no more Reason, Virtue, or moral Agency in one than the other.

But God, you will say, is not bound to give us an Account of all his Doings. His Judgments are unsearchable, and his Ways past finding out. 'Tis very true. But God, as a common Father, and righteous Governor, would certainly let me, and all Mankind, know their Duty, and what he expects from them, to secure his Favours and their own Happiness. And had he entrusted this with any Set or Order of Men in the World, he would, certainly, have given them sufficient Credentials, and Power or Authority enough to prove their Commission unexceptionable to all who might be concerned in it. He would never have sent Ambassadors upon Ambassadors with counter Orders, and with a Commission to do infinitely more Hurt than Good. He would never have plagued the World with a Revelation to the Destruction of all Peace and Charity, Sense and Reason. The Christian Clergy may account for this as well as they can, and prove that Churchism is Religion and Virtue if they are able; but they ought not to engage God and Providence, and Reason, and human Nature in  
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their Quarrel, till they are a little better agreed among themselves.

§. 7. But this, perhaps, may be thought Digression, and some may think it a needless one, and therefore, I shall return to the grand Point of Providence, or divine Conservation and Government. And here, besides what has been already said, I shall endeavour to state the Notion of it, or what I would understand by it.

It has been the great Unhappiness of Mankind, and especially of the Christian World, that the Ministers of Religion have seldom studied Nature, or made it the least Part of their Study. They have set up for Faith above Nature and Reason, which, however human and fallible, they call infallible and divine. They have represented the infinite Deity as a Man or temporal Prince, sitting upon his Throne, with his Servants, Attendants, and Ministers of State about him, and giving out occasional Orders, and fresh Commissions to one and another, just as present Incidents and Emergencies arise. He could not form a compleat Plan of Government at once, or constitute all the different Ranks and Orders of his ministerial Agents upon such general Principles and Laws of Nature, as should take Place in all particular Cases, so far as the Ends and Reasons of his Government required; But he has always his Messengers and Emiffaries about him, to traverse the



whole Creation, where he himself is not present; and to bring him Tidings of what happens here or there, that he may know what fresher Orders, or new Commissions, may be proper or necessary to be given out on such or such Occasions. This is the Divinity of positive Law, or Faith above Reason.

But surely the infinite, eternal, omnipresent, and immutable Mind, has not formed such a Plan of Government for himself, so much resembling human Ignorance, Weakness, and Want of Foresight. He had Knowledge and Power enough to settle a Plan of Government at first, such as might answer all his Designs, without any Need of future Emendations, or farther Notices from Time to Time.

§. 8. When we observe the Order of Nature, and Methods of Providence, we cannot but see that God has created, and continues to sustain, actuate, move, and direct a Universe, consisting of an infinite Series of Beings in Subordination and Dependence one upon another, from the highest to the lowest. In this Scale of Beings every Rank or Class has its Laws of Nature, its Powers, Capacities, and Ways of acting prescribed and fix'd. The mechanical Laws of Matter and Motion, the Sensations, Appetites, and Instincts of Animals, or the rational, intellectual Powers, and free Agency, or Self-determination  
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of Man, and other superior Beings, are not to be suspended, altered, or otherwise formed and directed to answer particular Purposes, by supernatural and miraculous Interpositions. This must necessarily invert the Order of Nature, put the whole Fabrick into Convulsions, and, perhaps, occasion the Dissolution of the whole Form, by a Defect and Want of Skill or Foresight in the original Plan.

§. 9. But without running upon such Absurdities, which have been advanced and maintain'd under the Pretence of supernatural Revelation, we may defend a particular Providence, and such occasional Interpositions, as moral Government requires, upon the general Laws of Nature, and the Order which God has established among the different Ranks, Classes, and natural Subordinations of Being in the Constitution of the Universe.

Great Difficulties and Controversies have arisen, and been carry'd on with the utmost Warmth and Confusion, about a *general*, and *particular Providence*. Some have deny'd either one or the other, *i. e.* deny'd all Providence or divine Government at all. These we would call proper Atheists, and give them up as Men of no *Sense* or *Judgment*, but all *Wit*. As to these Gentlemen who would deny all Providence, either general or particular, and who would maintain blind *Necessity* or *Chance* in the Government of the World, I

have nothing at all to say to them. They may please themselves with their imaginary Scheme; and if this is their Happiness, I think no Body ought to deprive them of it.

But besides this Scheme of *Necessity* or *Chance* without *Intelligence*, there are two other different Schemes of *intelligent Necessity*; which is the Necessity of *Reason* or *Sense*, of *natural* or *positive Law*; for whether you are a Man or a Brute, there is no Difference in this Way of talking, and no more Accountableness of Action in one Way than the other.

These Gentlemen would allow a general Providence, but not a particular one, which is wonderful; to have a General without a Particular, or a Particular without a General; a Species without Individuals, or Individuals without a Species! Such a Thing might be clear enough in Metaphysics or Divinity, but can be scarce intelligible in Reason or natural Philosophy.

§. 10. The Difficulty here lies in accounting for a particular Providence on the Foundation of general Laws, without any occasional, extraordinary and supernatural Interpositions. How God may govern the World, in Truth, Wisdom, and Righteousness, without priestly Miracles.

An infinite Series of Beings, from the smallest Atom, to the largest and most extensive Intelligence in the Scale of Entity or

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real Existence, can scarce be doubted of, or disputed, from what has been already observ'd and proved. Fixing our Point where we are, we see an infinite Gradation of Being and Perfection, both above and below us, so as to leave no Vacuity or Chasm in Nature.

Now, I suppose, the great Architect and Contriver who laid this Plan, was, at least, as wise and foreseeing as a common Workman, and that he did not contrive and make a Machine, a complete Piece, or finish'd Whole, with a Necessity of continually interposing and mending it afterward. And this being so, it must follow, that the Order and Succession of Things were so settled, at first, in the Chain of natural, occasional, or secondary Causes, that such particular Interpositions should be made by the natural Law of superior Beings, as might affect the inferior, subordinate Classes so far, as the Ends and Intentions of moral Government, Truth, and Rectitude require.

There is a natural Order and Subordination among the brute Creatures, or mere animal Class of Beings, so as to keep up an *Æquilibrium* or Balance of Power. The voracious carnivorous Kind, or less prolifick, have a Power or Commission, by the Law of Nature, to prevent the Overgrowth of the tame, and more prolifick Kind, that they might not overstock the Earth, or consume what might be necessary to the Subsistence  
of



of other Creatures. So that here is a Balance of Power, or *Æquilibrium* of Being establish'd, supposing no superior, intelligent Agency of Man, or other Rationals above him. But this, surely, shews a superior Wisdom and Contrivance, above, and beyond all this visible and sensible Constitution of Things.

This natural Order and Subordination between Animals, or the inferior brute Creatures, is visible enough, and sufficiently demonstrates a superior Wisdom and Contrivance. And if we come but one Step higher to Man, whom I take to be in the lowest Class of Rationals, and but just removed one Degree above the Brutes; we find he has Power and Authority given him by the general Law, and fundamental Constitution of his Nature, to judge and dispose of the Lives, Fortunes, and Condition of the inferior Creatures. He can save or destroy, nourish or starve them. By the Law of our Nature, and without any particular Commission or Revelation, we can eat Fish, Flesh, or Fowl. We can destroy some Creatures that we judge hurtful, and preserve and cultivate others that are necessary to higher Ends of Providence, than they themselves can perceive or judge of. This is the Case with respect to Man and other Creatures below him. And if we could but take one Step more, and suppose other intelligent free Agents above us, who have the same natural establish'd Authority and Com-

Command over us, as we have with regard to the inferior Ranks and Classes of Creatures, the Business of Providence, moral Government, and particular Interposition by general Laws of Nature, would be plain enough. But such is the Pride and Vanity of Man, that he can hardly believe there are any Creatures above him, or that he is not as much subject to superior intelligent Beings, and free Agents, as the poor brute Creatures are to him. This is the Conceit of rational Insects, or the Opinion of Worms at the Top of the Creation! But I see I must make the brute Creatures rational, in order to make some Rationals look a little above themselves. Let Brutes therefore be Men, and Men Brutes.

§. 11. By the Order of Nature, which I call the Order, Will, and continued Concurrence and Agency of God, we see this World has lasted, bad as it is, above 5000 Years, at least, and may last for ever, for any Thing we know. But however that be, (for I am no Judge of *Revelation*, or of any Thing above Nature and Reason) it may be necessary to consider how the Case stands, from what we can now find by Observation and Experience. I presume the Deity or supreme Being, will never require more of us than he has given, tho', perhaps, he may punish us for pretending to more.

A very great Question has been raised, and much discussed about a general and particular *Providence*; but I know no Man who has taken the Pains to examine the Ground of this Debate, or what Reason there could ever be for the Distinction. A General without a Particular, or a Particular without a General, in any Thing, seems very unintelligible. A general Providence, or Government of the World, without a particular Regard to Persons and Things, is blind Fatality or Necessity, and a particular without a general, is mere Chance, Fortuity or absolute Will, which some might call *Revelation* and Miracle. But it has been the great Unhappiness of Mankind, and especially of the Christian World, that the Ministers of Religion have seldom studied Nature. They have affected to represent Providence and divine Government, under the Form of human Jurisdictions, in which positive Orders and Commissions are given out from Time to Time, as Occasions offer, and Incidents arise. But, certainly, the Order of Nature, and the Laws and Conditions of Motion and Action, which God has fix'd and establish'd as the Rule and Measure of his Government, are sufficient to answer all the Ends of Providence, whether natural or moral. The Order and Laws establish'd among the several Ranks and Classes of Creatures in the Scale of Being, are so necessarily related to, and mutually dependent on each other,

other, that any Irregularity or Disorder which might otherwise happen in one, is corrected, balanced, and set right by another Class or Order of Being.

In the inferior brutal World, one Sort or Species of Creatures, correct, restrain, and counterpoise another. And Man, who is Lord of all, is set to preside over and govern them, to cherish, preserve, and succour some, and to destroy and root out others, so as to keep up an Order and Balance among them, within the Bounds of Nature and Providence. And thus irrational Creatures are made to serve rational Ends and Purposes in the Conduct of Providence, which they themselves cannot perceive, intend, or judge of. And this Art or Management of Man, and his Direction of the brute Creatures, must be all particular Interposition, and supernatural Agency to them that see nothing of these supernatural Laws and Springs of Motion. And God, in thus governing and directing the inferior brute Creatures by Man, does not, hereby, alter the Order of Nature, suspend its Laws, or change his Measures at every Turn. What might seem ever so surprizing to the lower Ranks of Creatures, with regard to human Agency, is yet, in Reality, as natural and regular as their own Appetites and Instincts, and as much the Effects of a settled, established Order.



§. 12. It is certain that rational free Agents must be governed and directed by the Laws of free Agency, by the Appearances of Good and Evil, by Hope and Fear, and by the proper, natural Motives of rational intelligent Agency. And from hence it is that Mankind, in Society, have so great a Power and Influence over one another: Without destroying Liberty and free Agency, they can alter one another's Purposes and Resolutions in a Moment, by suggesting and impressing different Motives and Reasons of Action, which had not been otherwise thought of or considered. Hence all the Force and Prevalency of human Laws, Example, Instruction, Advice, and Counsel; all the Power of Oratory and Persuasion, all the quick, sudden Change of Sentiments, and incidental Turn of Affairs, upon which the great Changes and Turns of private Fortunes, and great Revolutions of States and Kingdoms depend.

No rational intelligent Being can act morally without a Motive; and so far as we can impress Men with sufficient Motives and Reasons of Action, we may depend on what they will do, and be sure to influence and govern them; a single Thought suggested, or incidentally thrown in upon the Mind, shall alter, at once, a Man's whole Scheme of Action, and set him upon a new Projection. There is scarce any great Discovery made, any great Turn in a Man's Sentiments,

ments, Thoughts, and Views, or any of the great momentous Changes and Revolutions of the World, and human Affairs, but what is brought about by Ways and Means which we might be apt to call incidental and fortuitous, as if there had been no Thought or Design in it at all, no Providence or Law of Government, but all must be Chance, because we had not contrived and ordered it.

But these Things happen so often, that to ascribe it to Chance, would be to resolve every Thing into Fortuity, and to set aside all Wisdom, Contrivance, and Design in the Government of the World: Or, on the other hand, to resolve all into Miracle and particular supernatural Interpositions, as if there was no such Thing as general Laws of Nature, which must take Place in particular Cases, without incidental, positive Wills, fresh Commissions and Instructions, better Informations and new Lights thrown upon the Deity every Day.

But since Men, by Reasoning and Discourse, or by suggesting a Thought, have such a Power and Influence over one another, without destroying Liberty or free Agency, since this, I say, may be done in a visible and sensible Way, who can doubt but superior intelligent Beings, and free Agents, may have the same Power and Influence over us, as we have over one another, or the inferior Creatures? And why may not this be as much

much a general Constitution and Law of Nature, as what we observe, visibly and sensibly, with respect to our own Powers and Faculties?

I believe no Man can be so vain as to imagine himself at the Top of the rational, intelligent Creation, or that other superior, rational, intelligent Agents, by the general Law and Constitution of their Nature, and to serve the Ends and Purposes of Providence, may not have the same Power and Influence over us, as we have over the brute, or less rational Creatures below us.

But still, all such superior Influence and Direction must be agreeable to the Law of Nature in the Creature, which is to be thus influenced and governed. We can impress the Senses, Appetites and Passions of the inferior brute Creatures, but cannot inform their Understanding and Reason; we cannot give them the Notions and Ideas of general, abstract Truth, or direct and govern them in that Way: We must act upon them by such Means as are suitable to their Natures and Capacities. No Body would pretend to make a Parrot a Logician, or Ape an Astronomer. And in like Manner, whatever Power or Influence superior Beings may have over us, they must apply to our Understanding and Reason, such as it is, and could not inform or govern us by any Light above Reason. They could not reveal Things to us of which  
we

we have no Ideas, or give any superior Faculties, or Ways of perceiving, which God has not given us, and which are not founded in the general Law and Constitution of our Nature. They would, herein, act the same simple Part that a Man would in attempting to reason with his Horse, or to make his Dog a Divine. And this shews the Absurdity of those who talk to Men of a supernatural Light, or of Revelation above Reason. Such Philosophers and Theologasters may amuse, divide, inflame, or distract us, but they can never make us wiser, or better inform us.

§. 13. From hence we may see what Judgment we are to form concerning a very common, and very important Point, so often and warmly canvassed, concerning *divine Assistance*, and the Efficacy of *Prayer*. That the Notion of *Assistance* or *Concurrence*, whether *divine* or *human*, has nothing of *Necessity* in it, nothing repugnant to, or inconsistent with Liberty or free Agency, I think is very plain. I may assist a Man in his Studies, his Labours, or in making any other Acquisition, or obtaining an End, without taking away Liberty and Reason, or turning him into a Machine. A Man merits nothing, indeed, by my Assistance, but he may merit by making a good Use and Improvement of it. He may be praiseworthy, or blameable, as he takes or rejects good Advice, good Instructions, or right Motives

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tives and Reasons of Action, given him, or laid before him. But whether he complies with this or not, whether he takes or rejects it, he is still a free Agent, and nothing has been done to destroy his Liberty. But if a Man, in such a Case, should say, that you over-rule and controul him, that you cut off his own Choice, and that he had proper or necessary Motives and Reasons of Action before, he might be thought, perhaps, very proud, or very simple; but no Body would admire his Understanding or his Gratitude.

But if human Assistance is so very necessary, that we owe almost all our Acquisitions to it, both of Body and Mind, I cannot conceive what has given some Philosophers, if I may call them so, such an Antipathy to *divine Assistance*, as if God, or other superior Beings above us, by the Constitution and Law of their Natures, might not assist us as well, or better, than we can one another. If we should suppose some little contemptible Worms or Insects below us to reason after this Manner, we might, perhaps, despise them, and thank God for giving us better Understandings.

§. 14. But if there is such a Thing as Assistance, better Information, or communicable Light and Knowledge, established as a general Law of Nature through the whole Series and Subordination of Beings, a great Question still remains, how this shall be known

known or judged of, and what we must do, or how behave, in order to obtain and secure it? Is it to be obtain'd by Prayer, or must we tell our Beads, and say over *Pater-nosters* for it? Is this Illumination of the Mind, and Purity of the Affections to be got at Church, in the priestly Form of conveying Grace? You go constantly to Church, you attend all the Prayers there, you take Sacraments in Time and Order, you use all the prescribed, authoriz'd Means and Methods to grow wiser and better, and yet you are still rather worse and worse; and therefore, you think you might as well, or better, let all alone, and content yourself with being as wise and good as it pleas'd God you should be.

There is something, I must own, very shrewd in this Way of talking. But let them be accountable for the Satire or Ridicule of it, who place the Religion of Prayer in the mere outward Form of Gesture, Time, or Place, and not in the real Temper, Habits, or Disposition of Mind. But they who imagine that Prayer consists in any external Mode, Form, Gesture, or other Circumstance of Action, know nothing at all of the Thing, and might as well do any Thing else, or play as well as pray. They confound Light and Darkness, Heaven and Earth, Flesh and Spirit, *i. e.* they confound *Religion* with *Churchism*. They would fain persuade you that to

be a good Christian, a good Man, or a true Devotionist, you must be a strict, stanch Churchman, of some Party or Faction or other, and feed and pay your Priests and spiritual Guide well. If you complain of Hardships here, you are an Atheist; and if you grudge your Money, or think it ill bestow'd, you are an *Infidel*, and have no *Faith*.

But this will scarce keep up the Credit of any Clergy, or Spirituality long, especially now Peoples Eyes begin to open, and private Judgment has almost destroy'd spiritual Power or Church Authority. And yet for all this, I am most sincerely for the Excellency and Efficacy of Prayer, as soon as the Thing itself comes to be understood.

A constant, firm Dependence on the Deity, a firm, unshaken Faith or Trust in his Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, the Belief of his continued Presence, Agency, and Concurrence in all human Affairs, and offering up our Desires and Hearts to him, as the Father of Lights, the Fountain of all Truth, Order and Rectitude, and the Author and Giver of every good and perfect Gift, without whom we can receive or enjoy nothing; this I take to be the Spirit of Prayer, or that Temper and Disposition by which we are naturally and morally qualify'd for, and are to receive Favours and Blessings from God, as a Child from his Father.

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This filial Dependence on, Trust in, and Love of God as a Father, is what, I said, I take to be the Life, Spirit, or Soul of Prayer, and to which no outward Modes, Forms, Gestures, Habits, or Church Institutions, nor even so much as Words, can be essentially necessary.

But then, this Love of God, this depending on him, applying to him, seeking, and owning him in all our Ways, &c. is nothing else but the Love of, and Delight in Truth, Order and Rectitude. It is the postponing every inferior animal Appetite and Desire, and preferring Truth, in the Love of it, to all other Gratifications. He who seeks and loves Truth for its own Sake, seeks and loves God, whether he knows and owns it himself, or whether others may think so of him or not. For God is Truth and Light, and he who loves and seeks Truth and Light, loves and seeks God, and will be blessed and rewarded by him, with still farther and farther Degrees of Knowledge, Virtue and Happiness, whether he does it under such a formal Notion of seeking and loving God or no. For we are not to mind Names, but Things, not Shades, but Substance and Reality. And therefore, a profess'd Atheist may be a true Devotionist, and a Lover of God, without knowing or owning it.

A Child may love his Father under all his essential, real Characters, and yet hate a Mon-



ster which has been dress'd up and represented to him as his Father. A Man may, surely, love God, and yet hate a Monster or an Idol, and, in the mean While, others may condemn him as an Atheist, not because he does not seek and love the true God, but because he cannot love, worship, or acknowledge their Idol and false God. This, I believe, is no rare Thing in the World, and need not be taken as a *black Swan*.

Attention, the sincere Love of, and diligent Search after Truth, the seeking it for its own Sake, and preferring it, when found, to all other Treasure, Gain, or Reward, this, I say, is the true Love of God, and the only Way by which we can receive any Communications of Light, Knowledge, Virtue or Happiness from him. And if, setting aside this, we pretend to supernatural Revelation, positive Will and Pleasure, or an Authority prior to, and independent on the moral Truth, Reason and Fitness of Things, as the natural Objects of human Understanding, we may, by this Means, acquire the Reputation of sound orthodox Christians, and strenuous Advocates for the *Faith*, while we are quitting, and giving up the whole Cause of Truth, and resigning our Reason and Understandings to the blind Guidance of interested, designing Priests and Politicians. A very short and easy Way this, to Faith without Knowledge,

ledge, Wisdom without Virtue, and true *Churchism* without *Religion*.

But the sincere Love of, and Search after Truth for its own Sake, and a Resolution to embrace and stand to it, or abide by it whenever it is found, whether for or against us, with respect to any Party, Interest, or inferior Gratification of Sense and Appetite, Ambition or Avarice, this is, certainly, the spiritual, divine Temper, the Image of God in the Soul of Man, the Source of all Wisdom, Virtue and right Reason, and the only Security we can have for any Happiness, either of Body or Mind, in this World or the next. This is the true Knowledge and Worship of God, this is our Communion and Converse with him, this is abstracting from Flesh and Sense, from mere animal Appetite and Instinct, and uniting ourselves to the supreme Good, the Fountain of all rational Bliss, and the true System of intellectual Nature.

§. 15. But while I am writing in Defence of God and Providence, and of the established Laws and Order of Nature, against Authority, positive Religion, supernatural Revelation, and Miracles, it may be necessary to answer, or obviate some very popular Objections which are made, and strongly urged by the Gentlemen on the other Side, who may be supposed to have something more at Heart than the true Knowledge of God and

Nature. Their Education and Interest lead them to stand up for *Churchism*, and their *own Church* too, whatever it be. This is the Trade they have learned, and by which they must get their *Bread*, and none but an Atheist or Infidel would deprive them of it. They have Souls to be saved, and must live as well as others.

1. then, They urge, That *human Nature*, by the Fall of *Adam*, was so much corrupted and depraved, that we cannot, since that, judge of Truth and Reason in Morality or Religion. We hereby lost our natural Eye-Sight, or visive Faculty, and to have restored that, and made us rational again, would not have been sufficient; as we were punished for what we could not help, and did not consent to, or concur in, so we must be saved and restored by a Sacrifice which we did not consent to, and by a Faith above Nature and Reason. To doubt of this is Damnation, and not to see it clearly is for Want of a supernatural Light, or the Illumination of the *Spirit*. But this Pretence, I think, sufficiently answers itself, it has been already abundantly confuted, and I need say no more to it.

2. It is objected farther, " That besides  
 " supernatural Light and Eye-Sight, which  
 " are necessary to judge of spiritual, super-  
 " natural Objects, it is evident, from Nature  
 " and Reason itself, that without a superna-  
 " tural

“ tural Revelation, we cannot account for a  
 “ God or Providence, or prove that God  
 “ governs, and will judge the World in  
 “ Righteousness.

“ Providence, they say, from what we  
 “ can now see, or what has happened since  
 “ the Creation of the World, or Fall of  
 “ Man, to this Day, is not just or righteous,  
 “ unless we take in Revelation to help  
 “ us out of the Difficulty. And thus they  
 “ would force their own Scheme of God  
 “ and Providence upon us, or make us  
 “ downright Atheists. For thus they argue,  
 “ We see in Fact, and by all Experience,  
 “ that there is no just, equal, or righteous  
 “ Dispensation of Providence towards Men  
 “ in this Life. God here makes no Distinc-  
 “ tion betwixt Good and Bad, Virtuous or  
 “ Vitious, but all Things come alike to all;  
 “ as dieth the wise Man, so dieth the Fool,  
 “ Virtue has no more Regard paid to it than  
 “ Vice, and Righteousness or Unrighteous-  
 “ ness meet with the same Reward, and the  
 “ same Encouragement on this Side the  
 “ Grave. Nay, Virtue would be the worst  
 “ Choice or Chance in the World, and must  
 “ make a Man a very great Loser, if God  
 “ was not indebted to him for a Compensa-  
 “ tion hereafter. Immortality, therefore, or  
 “ eternal Life, is not a free Gift from God,  
 “ or a mere Matter of Grace, but a Debt  
 “ due from the Injustice or unequal Distri-  
 “ butions



" butions of his Providence and Government  
 " in our present State of Existence. You see  
 " then, continue they, that the Life and  
 " Immortality which is brought to light by  
 " the Gospel, is a Matter of *natural Right*,  
 " and not of *Revelation*. And yet you could  
 " have known nothing of it, or concluded  
 " any Thing about it by mere Reason with-  
 " out Revelation. It is true, indeed, that  
 " Heathens who had no such Revelation, all  
 " believed a future State of Rewards and Pu-  
 " nishments for good and bad Men. But  
 " then they believed it as a Matter of Rea-  
 " son, without any good Reason to believe  
 " it. But they had not the Certainty of Re-  
 " velation and supernatural Faith, and there-  
 " fore, the wisest and most penetrating Men  
 " amongst them, express'd themselves doubt-  
 " fully about it. But we are sure of it by  
 " Revelation, and we are very sure from Rea-  
 " son, that if it was not so, God could not  
 " be just, and no Man could defend the  
 " Wisdom or Equity of his Providence in  
 " this Life."

I have here personated a modern Christian  
 Divine, and think I have not at all injured  
 or misrepresented him, or if I have, no  
 Doubt but it will be complain'd of. But  
 the Inconsistency here, between the Argu-  
 ment as drawn from Reason and Revelation,  
 must be visible to every one. The future  
 State of Rewards and Punishments was not

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known before the Revelation of the Gospel, which has brought Life and Immortality to light. But yet this is a Principle in Nature and Reason which was, or might have been known without Revelation, and of which, consequently, the heathen Philosophers and Moralists did, or might have known or judged as well as we. For if the Soul is not personally immortal, and if every Man who has been injured here, is not to receive a Recompence in another Life, God cannot be just, and his Providence or Government of the World cannot be vindicated, or so much as excused. But if eternal Life and Immortality be a free Gift from God, which we could have had no Right or Claim to otherwise, or upon the Foot of Reason and common Providence, our Divines are certainly in the wrong, to demand upon the Score of Justice and Reason, what they own, at the same Time, to know only by Revelation and Promise from God, as a Matter of Revelation, promised Gratuity, or free Gift. But demanding Immortality and eternal Life from God, for good Men, as a Matter of Right and Reason, and yet, at the same Time, making it a Matter of pure Revelation and free Grace, is such an Absurdity and Inconsistency as the heathen Philosophers and Moralists could never have been guilty of. But such Absurdities and Contradictions must always arise from inconsistent Principles. While  
Reve-

Revelation must be superior to Reason, and, at the same Time, true Reason the sole Judge and Arbitress of Revelation, we may expect such Systems of Divinity, and Classes of Divines, as the Christian World has been blest with for so many hundred Years.

§. 16. But the Question concerning the Origin and Cause of Evil, and how to reconcile this to the wise and righteous Government of the World, is a Matter which lies somewhat deeper. This has very much perplex'd the Thoughts, and employ'd the Inquiries and Researches of wise and good Men in all Ages. The Solution of this Difficulty, therefore, must be a Matter of farther Inquiry: For here the heathen Moralists and Christian Divines have been equally puzzled and perplex'd, and Revelation seems to afford no Help in the Case, but rather darkens and perplexes it more.

The Fall of *Adam*, and the universal Degeneracy and Corruption of all Mankind in him, or the Power of the Devil in tempting and seducing to Evil, who is a Creature that God has created, and preserves for that very Purpose, seem to give one here but little Relief. This would be only cutting the Knot, instead of untying it, and Tinker-like, making two Holes for every one that is mended.

The true Solution, therefore, I take to be this, that there is no such Thing as Evil upon the Whole, that God governs the World by  
general,

general, and not particular Laws, and that whatever we complain of, or blame as Evil, cannot be mended consistent with the general Plan and Design of Wisdom, Truth, and Order in the Creation.

There is no Man who has thought at all about this Matter but must know, that all Nature, or the Unity, End, and Design of the whole Creation, is a harmonious Mixture and Composition of Antiperistases: A Unity of Design in contriving, and adjusting contrary Elements and Qualities, into one complete, eternal Whole, which we call the Creation or Universe. Sympathies and Antipathies, Good and Evil, Pleasure and Pain, Light and Darkness, Heat and Cold, &c. are all equally necessary, and one could not exist, or form a universal Whole with any Unity of Design without the other. Evil is as necessary in Wisdom and Design, as Good, and Pain as Pleasure. Without this there could be no Unity of a Whole, no Wisdom or Design, and no real or intelligible Difference in the Nature and Reason of Things.

§. 17. Let any Man consider the Constitution of Nature, such as it is, so far as our Experience and Observation can go, and beyond this I pretend to know nothing: But whoever will take Things as they are, must see, that there is no Pleasure, either sensitive or rational, but what arises from, and is the Result of Pain.

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All Pleasure, so far as we know any Thing of it, or are capable of it, is the Gratification of Desire, or the Removal of Pain; for Desire is in its own Nature Pain and Uneasiness. And if we desired nothing, or had no Pain or Uneasiness, we should seek and pursue nothing. Without this there could be no Sense, Action, or vital Motion, either animal or rational, but every Creature would be as senseless, indolent, and unactive as a Stone. What we now call Life would be Death, and an eternal State of Sleep and Inaction.

I shall consider this in the animal and rational Pains and Pleasures, and shew, that in both, Pleasure arises from Pain, or is nothing else but the Gratification of Desire, or Removal of Uneasiness.

Warming gives us Pleasure when we are too cold, or painfully cold, and cooling when we are too hot, or when Heat has given us Pain. But as soon as these contrary Qualities or Sensations are reduced to an *Æquilibrium*, and we are neither too hot nor too cold, we are immediately, with regard to these Sensations, in a State of Indolence, Inaction, or *Sleep*. The Case is the same with respect to any other animal Appetite, Desire or Uneasiness. Eating and Drinking could give us no Pleasure or Gratification at all, nor should we have any Motive or Inducement to those Actions at all, were we not urged and prompted to them by the preceding

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Stimulus, Pain, or Uneasiness of *Hunger* and *Thirst*. We may see the same Law and Order of Nature, in the generative Appetite, Desire or Instinct, by which the Species of all Animals are preserved, immortalized, and made perpetual. Was not the Pain or Uneasiness to precede, there could be no consequent Gratification or Pleasure, and no Motive or Inducement, either to the Action or the Enjoyment. All Propagation would immediately cease; all Species be extinct, and all animal Nature destroyed and dissolved. And if any acute Philosopher now could mend all this, and put Things into a better Course, he ought at least to give us his rectified Scheme of universal Nature, Government and Providence.

But it is not only in the animal Appetites, Desires and Affections, that Pain precedes Pleasure, and that one is the Rule, Measure and Proportion of the other; but the same Law of Nature holds good with respect to our most intelligent, rational and abstract Pleasures, which have the least Relation to or Connexion with Matter and Motion.

The Desire and Love of Truth, Order and Rectitude is the intellectual Passion, or natural Stimulus and Motive to all wise, reasonable and virtuous Actions: Without this, there could be no Difference, as to any Motive or Pursuit, between Virtue and Vice, Right and Wrong, or moral Good and Evil.

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What would be Truth, what Virtue, if not connected with Happiness in the Desire, Love and Pursuit of it? Would Truth be Good, if it was not necessarily connected with and productive of Good or Happiness to him, who desires, loves and seeks it? Or what is the natural Object of Desire, or who would value or seek it, if his Happiness really did not consist in it, but lay in something else?

But such is the Constitution of Nature, that Truth, Order and Rectitude are necessarily related to and connected with the Happiness, the whole Happiness of Individuals, whether private or social. But then this rational, intellectual Pleasure and Happiness can never be obtained without the Pain, Trouble or Labour of desiring, seeking and prosecuting it. We must dig and search for it, as for a hidden Treasure; we must prefer it to Gold and Silver, or all the Riches of both *Indies*. We must hunger and thirst after Truth and Righteousness more than for our daily Food, and feel more Pain in the Want of it, than in Poverty, Disgrace or any Affliction or Suffering without it.

So necessarily is Pain connected with Pleasure, and natural Good with Evil, that one could not subsist, be seen, felt or understood without the other. All our Pleasures and Gratifications of every Kind, whether animal or rational, intellectual or sensitive, arise from and are founded in the preceding Pain or Uneasiness

easiness of Desire: Without this, there could be no Life or Action, nothing but perfect Indolence, Inaction or profound Sleep.

§. 18. This general, or rather universal Law and Constitution of Nature can hardly be denied or doubted of, even by those who are most disaffected to and out of Humour with God and Providence. But some, perhaps, will say, that there are many particular Cases and Instances in which the Wisdom and Justice of Providence cannot be vindicated from any Thing we can see or know of it yet, if Things some Time or other were not to take another Turn, and be better managed.

“ Providence, say they, or divine Ordina-  
 “ tion and Government in this Life, proceeds  
 “ upon no Principle or Rule of Wisdom,  
 “ Equity or Justice at all: For here we com-  
 “ monly see Virtue oppress’d, and Vice tri-  
 “ umphant. The Wicked flourish like a green  
 “ Bay-Tree, and have their Heart’s Ease and  
 “ their Heart’s Desire, while the Righteous  
 “ are humbled in the Dust, and are made  
 “ the Property and Pastime of Tyrants and  
 “ the worst of Men. If, therefore, there  
 “ should not be an eternal Life and Happi-  
 “ ness for good Men, and eternal Plagues  
 “ and Torments for the Wicked hereafter,  
 “ Providence, from the Beginning of the  
 “ World to this Day, could never be justi-  
 “ fied, and we could not believe, that a Be-  
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“ing of infinite Wisdom and Goodness governs the World.”

This is, certainly, a home Charge upon the Deity, and instead of taking Life and Immortality as a *free Gift* or *Gratuity* from God, it is demanding it in Point of Justice, and as a necessary Compensation for his wrong and unequal Measures in Time past. These sanguine Gentlemen have a Demand upon God for a happy Futurity, and they put the Wisdom and Equity of his Dealings with Mankind, hitherto, upon the Right of such a Claim. And since they have such a Right, both in Law and Equity, I hope they will never take it as a Matter of Grace.

But, perhaps, they have been too rash and hasty in concluding the iniquitous Dealings of Providence in this Life, abstracted from the Consideration of any other. In this they seem to forget the grand Principle of all Religion and Virtue, *viz.* that Virtue is its own Reward, and Vice its own Punishment in the very Nature and Reason of Things, abstracting from all future, positive Rewards and Punishments. And yet this is a Truth which, at other Times, and on other Occasions, they will not scruple to espouse and defend. But these Gentlemen, always conscious and secure of their own Strength and Integrity, while they are impeaching the Wisdom and Justice of Providence from the Beginning of the World to the End, as to  
the

the Management of Affairs here, are not aware that they are cutting themselves off from all the Evidence or Proof of the Being of a God, or any wise and righteous Government at all. If the Law of Nature itself has no just and righteous Sanctions, it will be impossible ever to prove a better State of Things upon the Foot of any other Law. If Virtue be not its own Reward, and Vice its own Punishment in the natural, necessary Consequences, if the one be not the proper Happiness and Glory, and the other the Misery and Shame of human Nature, if this, I say, be not so, I should despair of ever proving any Thing of a God or Providence, or any Wisdom or Justice in the Constitution and Order of Things. Such a Supposition must destroy all Reason, as well as all Pretensions to Revelation, and this would be a very odd Way of proving the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State.

If the Justice and Equity of Providence, in this Life, cannot be vindicated without supposing another State of Things, in which God must be obliged to make some Compensations, Retributions, and Amendments for what has happened amiss, and been suffered to go on wrong here for so many thousand Years; if this, I say, be the Case, I doubt our Positive-Law, or Revelation Men must come off with very little Credit or Reputation.

“ Providence, say they, for five or six  
 “ thousand Years past, has not been directed  
 “ or ordered upon any Principle of Reason  
 “ or Justice. And, therefore, unless you will  
 “ indebit the Almighty for a future State of  
 “ Justice and Reason, you have no God at  
 “ all. You are all Atheists, and you know  
 “ nothing of God or Nature, if you will  
 “ not suffer us to be the Judges of Revela-  
 “ tion above Reason. Pray consider, how we  
 “ have been educated, with what Expence and  
 “ Care. Consider, how well we have stood  
 “ by the Gospel at our own Loss, what a per-  
 “ fect Harmony we have kept up among our-  
 “ selves; how much we have saved you from  
 “ any Doubts or Difficulties about Religion,  
 “ and how much better you are off, than if  
 “ you had no spiritual Guides at all, or paid  
 “ nothing for it.” All this may be true e-  
 nough, for I would not dispute any Thing with  
 a Priest or spiritual Ruler. But the Equity,  
 Wisdom, and Justice of Providence in this  
 Life, or ever since the Creation of the World,  
 may be worth debating, even tho’ the Deity  
 had never taken them into his privy Council,  
 or given them any such Demonstrations for  
 Futurity. The Reasons for the Immortality  
 of the Soul, and a future State, may be con-  
 sidered afterwards; but, I think, it must be  
 perfectly wrong to conclude, as our Priests  
 of all Religions do, that if *Man is not im-*  
*mortal, God must be unjust.*

This,

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This, surely, is a Question of great Importance, and may be worth debating even with the Christian Spirituality, who are set over us for the Defence of the Gospel, and who, by sufficient Credentials, are Ambassadors from Christ, and our sure Guides in the Way to Salvation.

These Gentlemen, authoriz'd as they are, have a Right to tell us, that if we will not grant their reveal'd Scheme of positive Laws, and Revelation above Reason, we are all Atheists, we must renounce all Virtue, Reason, and Religion, and must be either as wise and honest as they, or downright Fools and Knaves. All this, perhaps, may be true enough, and yet it may be worth while to vindicate the Laws of Nature, the real Constitution of the Universe, and righteous Ways of God and Providence, against these Mens supernatural Knowledge, pretended Revelations, and visionary Schemes.

§. 19. The Question here is, not whether the Soul of Man be immortal, or whether there will be any future State of Existence or not; for the Affirmative, in this Case, as I shall shew afterwards, is, at least, highly probable. But what I would debate is this, Whether the Iniquity, or unrighteous Distributions of Providence, in this Life, must infer such a future State of just Retribution, or indebit the Deity, and make him accountable for it: Or whether the Ways of God to Man,



so far as we can now see or know any Thing of it by Observation and Experience, can be justify'd, without indebiting him for eternal Life and Immortality? And this is a Question of such Consequence, that almost the whole Proof of *Revelation* above *Reason* must depend upon it.

We will suppose then, for Argument's Sake, tho' it is not to be granted, that there is no Life to come. Why then, say they, God must be unrighteous or unjust, and you cannot prove, upon such a Supposition, that there is any God or Providence at all. But without calling in the Assistance of supernatural Revelation, I think I can prove, from Nature and Reason, that such a Charge against God and Providence, must be unrighteous and unjust. Virtue, say they, is not rewarded, nor Vice punished in this Life, agreeably to the Rules of Wisdom, Justice and Equity. And by this they plainly deny Virtue to be the Happiness and Glory, and Vice the Misery and Shame of Man, by any Law of Nature, or established Reason, Truth and Relations of Things. And thus necessary is it for Men, in Defence of supernatural Revelation, or Religion above Reason, to throw off the Law and Religion of Nature.

The Afflictions and Sufferings of good, and Happiness and Prosperity of bad Men, have been always a perplexing Difficulty with weak Minds, and prejudiced Reasoners about  
 God

God and Providence. But they do not consider that all this is shooting at Random, and running on in the Dark; and these Sages and Arbiters of Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, are no Judges at all, either of Virtue or Happiness. The good and virtuous Man, say they, suffers more, and the vitious and wicked Man enjoys more than he ought in Right and Reason. But can they judge of Virtue and Vice, or Happiness and Unhappiness, otherwise than by outward Appearance? Or is this Appearance, in any Case, a Rule and Measure of Truth?

I might here run over all the Sanctions of the Law of Nature, or the necessary, natural Consequences of Virtue and Vice, and then consider, whether a good Man has not his Reward in Hand, or whether a vitious and wicked Man need any other Devil, or farther Punishment to plague him for his Sins. If we consider the Sanctions of the Law of Nature, as to the natural, necessary Consequences of Vice, the Rage of ungoverned Passions, the eternal, incessant Torture of insatiable Desires, the inward Stings of Conscience, or Reproaches, and Lashes of abused Reason, the Pain, Diseases, Poverty, Shame, Contempt and Ignominy in Hospitals, Jails, and at the Gibbet, which are the natural Retributions of evil Doing; I think a Man must be very malicious who should desire a farther

Punishment, and very uncharitable to pronounce the virtuous and good Man a Loser.

From hence it may be concluded, that we cannot judge, by any outward Appearances, either of *Virtue* or *Happiness*. And, therefore, it must be extreme Absurdity and Prejudice to make the virtuous and good Man miserable, and the vicious and wicked Man happy, from such Appearances and false Light as can be no Rule or Measure of either. And what makes this the worse, and more inexcusable is, that such a blind Judgment is pass'd to censure and condemn the Law of Nature, and the Ways of God and Providence, in the Government of the World. And, therefore, it seems, unless God would make another, and a better World, and alter all his Laws and Measures hitherto, he cannot have our Thanks or Approbation. And this is, doubtless, good Divinity, whatever Sort of Reason and Philosophy it might be.

§. 20. But it is still objected against God and Providence, That there is more Evil, both natural and moral, than Good in the World, more Pain than Pleasure, more Darkness than Light, more Ignorance than Knowledge, and more Vice than Virtue, which could not consist with any wise and righteous Ordination and Government. This Objection might be of some Force, were it brought by proper Judges, but as it is urged only by such reasoning Insects as we, perhaps there may be

nothing in it. For this Complaint only expresses the Pride and Discontent that every Worm is not a Man, every Man an Angel, or every Angel a God. The Meaning is, that all Nature is wrong, that God ought to new-model the whole Creation, to alter or reverse all the Laws of Nature, to destroy all Distinction between Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, Pleasure and Pain, Light and Darkness, &c. The Deity ought, it seems, to destroy all Truth, Reason, and natural Relations of Things. He ought to make a new Creation, in which there should be Truth without Falshood, Knowledge without Ignorance, Pleasure without Pain, and Light without Darkness. And these Disparates and Antiperistases ought to subsist and be understood, and the Nature and Reason of Things kept up without any Difference or Distinction in the Nature and Reason of Things at all.

The Pain of Desire ought not to excite the Pleasure of Gratification, or the Pleasure ought to continue after the Pain is removed. Thus every Thing is wrong in Nature, and these acute Reasoners have no other Complaint, but that they did not make the World themselves, and cannot mend it. But the greatest moral Evils that are complain'd of, are their own Cure and Correctives, and, perhaps, the only, or most effectual Remedies that, consistent with the general Laws and Constitution of Nature, could be apply'd.

No



No Body would blame God and Providence for the Sensations of Heat and Cold, the Appetites of Hunger and Thirst, the Desire of Procreation, the Love of the Species, and Care of the Young and Helpless, &c. These natural Appetites and Instincts, are not condemned by the greatest Malecontents and Enemies to Nature, because the Reason and Necessity of it, and the excellent Ends it serves, are visible to every one.

That natural Pleasure and Pain, in the present Constitution of Things, are necessary Correlates, and that one cannot subsist, exist, or be felt or understood without the other, perhaps, may be allow'd after what has been said. But the great Difficulty is with respect to moral Evil, and how God should suffer it without being the Author of it, or, at least, without approving it. For since he has Power enough, and does not prevent it, it must be because he will not, or does not think it right and fit to prevent it. That he has Power sufficient to restrain and suppress all the Wickedness and moral Evil in the World, can hardly be doubted; but then this must be by destroying Liberty, and not leaving Men to their free Judgments and Choice, or making Man a quite different Creature from what he is, and putting him in a very different Capacity and Sphere of Action. Not to suffer Men to follow their own Judgment and Choice, would be destroying all free Agency  
and

and moral Government. And to put Mankind into another and superior Sphere of Action, by making him, suppose, equal to the Angels, and placing him above the common Weakness, Ignorance and Imperfections of human Nature, this would be destroying the Unity of Design, and breaking in upon the Order of the whole Creation. For it is as necessary in the Scale of Being, which completes the Unity and Design of the Whole, as necessary, I say, that there should be a Class of Beings, acting in this Sphere or Capacity, as that there should be any other Rank or Class of Creatures, either above or below us.

The Effects of the Ignorance and Errors, the Lusts and Passions of Men, are but particular, incidental and occasional Evils. But as they are under the Conduct and Direction of Providence, they are made subservient to the best and wisest Ends and Purposes; and the greatest general Good, often arises from such particular Evils. And then those very Errors and Vices, the irregular Appetites and Passions of Men, correct themselves. The Pains and Sufferings which they bring with them, and are naturally and necessarily attended with, are so many Monitors and Instructors in the School of Virtue. The natural Consequences of Vice, tend to create an Abhorrence of it, to teach true Wisdom by Experience, and to reclaim them from a  
Course

Course so naturally destructive to their Peace and Happiness. Perhaps more are gain'd over to the Love and Pursuit of Truth and Virtue, by this Way of dear Experience and Suffering, than by any other. And thus Providence, by the general Law of Nature, brings Good out of Evil, and lays the first Foundations of Virtue, in the natural Plagues and Punishments of Vice.

§. 21. But while I am vindicating the Wisdom and Justice of Providence in its present Dispensations, abstracted from any farther Consideration of a future State of Existence, I would not be thought hereby to deny, or preclude the Immortality of the Soul, or a future State of Happiness for good Men. We have very strong Reasons to conclude this, without charging God and Providence with Partiality and Injustice upon a contrary Supposition. For,

1. Man is naturally, and by the essential Constitution of his Mind, an accountable Creature. He is a free, intelligent, moral Agent. And it is scarce conceivable that God should make such a Creature without designing ever to bring him to an Account, or to govern and judge him by the Law of his own Nature. Such a Creature would seem to be made in vain, or without designing him for the End which his very Nature and Constitution fits and qualifies him for, and points out to him.

2. The

2. The progressive Nature of Reason and Intelligence, still tending to enlarge and expand itself, and to take in more and more Truths *in infinitum*, and without Bounds; from hence, I think, it is evident, that the Mind or Understanding of Man, the Object of whose Perceptions is *Truth*, infinite, boundless Truth, that such a Mind, I say, or reasoning Soul, cannot be confined to the narrow Boundaries and low Interests or Concerns of this gross, elementary Body, in which it is now immersed in Flesh and Sense. This rational Part, Power or Principle in Man, the Mind or Understanding, is absolutely independent of Matter and Motion, and its Actions and Perceptions intirely and essentially distinct from Time, Place, Matter and Motion, as I have proved already. It is true that the Sensations, Appetites and Instincts of Animals, have all the essential Properties and Attributes of Matter and Motion; they exist and move in Space; they subsist in this or that Part of Space, and not in another. Pleasure and Pain of the animal Kind, is here or there, in the Head and not in the Heel, in the Heart and not in the Hand. It exists, therefore, in the organiz'd, sensitive Nerves, which are the proper Seat and Subject of it. But Intellection, the Perception of Truth, or the Act and Object of the Understanding, has no Relation to Time or Space. An eternal, immutable Truth, which is the Object  
of



of the Mind or Understanding, is not here or there, now or then; and these Acts and Objects of the Mind are plainly independent of, and essentially distinct from all Time and Place, Matter and Motion.

It is true, that the organical, material Senses send in from without the Materials of Thinking, Reasoning, and the abstract, intellectual Perceptions of Truth. But the thinking, reasoning Mind, is as essentially different from these, as a Workman is from the Materials he works upon, or the Instruments which he employs in working. And this, I think, is sufficient to demonstrate, that the Materials or Tools are not the Workman, or that the external Sensations, Appetites and Instincts, are not the Mind or rational Principle in Man. The Mind is, therefore, essentially distinct from, and naturally independent of Matter and Motion, Time and Place, tho' it acts after this Manner, and by these Instruments and Organs, in its present imperfect State of Existence.

3. The moral Character, or the prevailing Love, Desire and Pursuit of Truth, Order and Rectitude, is the divine Stamp and Signature upon the Mind or Soul of Man. This Spirit and Temper is the Earnest and Pledge of Immortality, and continued Favour from the Deity, who will certainly never forsake those who do not forsake him. Truth and Virtue are as immortal as God himself, and

where this Spirit and Temper is fix'd, I take it to be the natural Characteristic of Immortality, and a sure Declaration from God, that he has mark'd out, and design'd this Creature for eternal Life and Happiness.

4. God, in the very Frame and Constitution of human Nature, has set up a righteous Tribunal and Judicature in every Man's own Breast. Here Reason, Conscience, or moral Judgment presides, as the supreme Judge and Arbiter of moral Good and Evil, Right and Wrong. But Reason and Conscience are now very often born down, and cannot be listened to. The tumultuous, rebellious Appetites and Passions, often clamour and rage, and drown or silence the still sober Voice of Reason. But, surely, there will be a Time come, when the supreme Judge will have a Hearing, and when God will vindicate his Authority in the Soul of Man: When Sense, Appetite and Passion, must hear and submit to the Judgment and Decision of Reason, and when the Creator and supreme Governor of the World, will invincibly demonstrate to all his rational Creatures, his natural Right of Dominion.

These Reasons and Considerations, among others, appear to me, at present, sufficiently convincing, without impeaching the Conduct of Providence in this Life, or debiting the Almighty for a future State of Retribution. For if it should be granted that God has governed

verned the World, and managed Affairs unequally, partially and unrighteously, for five or six thousand Years, or so far as our Observation and Experience can go, I cannot imagine what Proof we could have that Things will ever be better, or that the Errors and Blunders of Providence in this Life, should be ever compensated and made up in another. And whatever some prating Priests may say, I believe no wise or good Man would debit his Maker for a future Happiness, or give it as his sober, settled Judgment and Opinion, that he has suffered, even in this Life, more than he deserved, or more than could be consistent with Wisdom and Justice, if he had not, afterwards, a farther Recompence of Reward.

The *Sadducees* among the *Jews*, were not Atheists, but Materialists, or temporary Deists. They believed a God, as the omnipotent Creator, wise Disposer, and righteous Governor of the World. They thought Virtue the Happiness, and Vice the Misery and Destruction of Man, and that God would reward the one and punish the other, by a righteous Providence in this Life, not only personally, but in every Man's Issue and Posterity, to the third and fourth Generation. And this Principle of theirs guarded their Virtue, and made them much better Moralists than the *Pharisees*, who pretended to a much greater Sanctity, and offered

ed the Rewards of another World, only to secure their Interests, and support their Avarice and Ambition in this. But the Christian or Gospel Deism, which I have espoused, and which I cannot but think most rational, is, undoubtedly, preferable to the *Sadducean* Scheme, and must have had a better Effect, had not the Artifice of Priests defeated it, by setting up, and promising positive Rewards and Punishments hereafter, for Obedience or Disobedience to their own positive Laws. But this positive Scheme of supernatural Faith and Revelation, had almost set aside the true Religion of God and Nature, which, therefore, I thought fit to consider as I have done.

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